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# NATURE AND BLESSEDNESS

OF

# CHRISTIAN PURITY.

BY REV. R. S. FOSTER.

With an Introduction,

BY EDMUND S. JANES, D. D.,

ONE OF THE BISHOPS OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

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# PREFACE.

READER, what is the great object of life? Is it not to *be* good, and to *do* good, and thus to glorify God? I am sure I should do you great injustice to suppose you capable to return any other answer. But this sentiment is precisely my apology for presenting you the following treatise. No other consideration would have brought it before the public. Its author has no other object to subserve—no other aim to gratify. It comes to you on a mission of love, with a sincere desire for your welfare, and a single intention to promote it. He wishes to do good, and would avail himself of the widest means. I know you will commend the object—I trust you will approve the method. He might have contented himself in his ordinary pulpit and private ministrations; but then he reflected, that possibly he might extend the sphere of usefulness by employing other agencies. If he reaches thousands with his voice, he remembered, that he might reach thousands more with the pen. If he impresses a few in public assemblies, and in friendly circles, he reflected, that he might reach others in their retirement, and impress them in their solitude. If he speaks to some now, he remembered, that "the night cometh in which no

man can work," when his voice will be silent—he might speak, when dead, through the printed page. This hope of widening the sphere of usefulness, and extending it through a longer period, decided him. Is it a chimerical hope? He trusts not. If any good shall be done to any one, that would not have been done without the publication, he will be amply repaid, and rejoice that "he has not run in vain, neither laboured in vain." If a single soul shall be saved, he will feel that such a result would have been worth an eternity of toil; if any shall be quickened to higher exertion, his effort will be a thousand times compensated.

One word more, and the preface concludes. The author is painfully sensible that his production has many defects, but he believes that they are such as will not be injurious to the reader—blemishes rather than poisons. For these he asks your indulgence. Conscious of the sincerity of his motives, and hoping for the Divine benediction, he sends it forth upon its mission, trusting to find, in the day of the Lord Jesus, that it has produced some fruit. May the great Head of the Church bless both writer and reader, and bring them to that realm where they shall see eye to eye, and know as they are known!

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# INTRODUCTION.

In writing, as we must do, a hasty Introduction to Mr. Foster's book on Christian Purity, we deem it improper and out of taste, though it may not be out of fashion, to introduce extraneous subjects. In our judgment, an introduction to a book should be a modest, truthful statement of its character and claims. We shall proceed upon this principle.

The work is divided into ten chapters, with descriptive headings. The first chapter is properly the author's introduction. It is addressed to the reader, and headed, "*The Occasion, Nature, and Object of the Work.*" The too great influence of "the things which are seen and temporal," the exigences of the Church, which imperiously demand that all her members should come "unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ," and the author's intense desire to see the Church awake and put on her strength, and put on her beautiful garments, are the occasion of the book.

*What does the Gospel propose to us as our present personal privilege?* What, as to moral and spiritual excellence, has it *for me,* now? These are the grand inquiries which the author proposes to answer. Consequently his theme must be, "The fulness of the Gospel of Christ"—The holiness of the Bible—The perfectness to which Christians may attain by Divine grace in this probationary estate. What a theme! What spiritual beatitudes has Infinite Love se-

cured to us in this life by the agonies of Calvary? How fully can the Infinite Spirit which worketh in us mightily transform us now, whilst on earth? To what present attainments does the word of God invite us, and the authority of God bid us? How sweet and sublime the office of answering these questions!—to concentrate the rays of Holy Scripture on this glorious subject, and in the strong light thus furnished, enable the inquiring disciple to see clearly and fully his high calling of God in Christ Jesus. This work has been happily performed by the author in this book.

In executing this important work, the author has not set himself forth as a theological reformer. He has given no new and novel theory. He has set up no rivalry with other writers on the subject. He has made no assaults upon standard Wesleyan authorities. He has not attempted to modify the long and generally received and cherished doctrines of the Methodist Church on this question; nor has he, as a sectarian, laboured to controvert the opinions of other Churches. The work is also unencumbered with philosophical and metaphysical speculations. It is an earnest, practical treatise on the subject. It is a meek, ardent, prayerful effort, vividly to exhibit the principles and glories of Christian Purity, and to urge and enforce its claims. Surely such a book needs no apologist. It cannot find opponents among earnest, devoted Christians. All such will hail its advent. They will welcome it as another well-adapted instrumentality to promote vital godliness in the world; as a channel through which the crystal waters of the river of life may flow into human hearts, which are hungering and thirsting after righteousness; as an efficient agency for leading sinners to that blood which cleanseth from all sin. Such are the manifest as well as professed

objects of the work, the spirit with which it is imbued, and the ability with which it is executed, that they cannot fail to secure for it the favourable regard even of those devout, holiness-loving Christians who may differ from the author relative to some of the views he has set forth. If they cannot embrace all his sentiments, they will fellowship his spirit. No one in the enjoyment of Bible holiness, and anxious for its spread and prevalence in the Church and in the world, will doubt that the circulation of this little volume will do good—will be promotive of the glory of God in the sanctification of his children. In order to this, it is not necessary that the book should be better than the Bible, or even superior to the writings of Wesley, and Fletcher, and Watson, and Merritt, and Peck, and Bangs, and others, on this subject. Without claiming this pre-eminence, the work may be highly useful. It may relieve some minds of their perplexities concerning the nature of sanctification, the way of its attainment, or its evidences. It may present the motives to its pursuit in a way that, to some persons, will be more fascinating, or more pungent and successful. Again: every man has his circle of influence. Each author on this subject will secure some readers that would not give attention to the writings of others. Here is a power for good that ought not to be lost. Verily, if there is any subject on which we need line upon line, and precept upon precept, the theme of this book is that subject. If there is any religious truth that should be urged upon the disciples of Jesus, with the sweetness of his constraining love, and the solemnity of his Divine authority, it is the truth, that Christians may, and ought to be holy. O that tens of thousands of individuals, filled with its bliss, and inspired by its power, were telling of its charms, and inviting to its

pursuit! O that tens of thousands of spiritual limners, the Holy Spirit guiding their pencils, were actively and ceaselessly engaged in portraying the glories of this subject to the vision of the Church, until every member of it, ravished by its beauties, and impelled by its attractions, would aspire to its attainment, by faith enter into its enjoyment, and then join in labours to spread it! Reader, before you proceed further, stop and pray for this. Holiness is the greatest good—the highest destiny of the militant Church, and the most precious interest of the race. A holy Church would soon make a holy world. If the Church were without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, her light could not be hid. When the Church puts on her entire strength, her influence must be triumphant in the world. When her hearts, and hands, and means, and influences, are all devoted to God and his cause, her aggressive movements will be mighty, will be world-saving. As this book wisely instructs, judiciously and faithfully admonishes, and affectionately and earnestly invites, the Church to heed this duty—to secure this interest, it cannot fail to be highly useful. Its literary character is good. The style will interest most readers. But the author has not been careful about this. He has sought to give the work higher claims. In this he has succeeded. To interest the reader in the subject, and not in the book, is his aim. Stupid, indeed, must that reader be who is not interested in the subject. The truth set forth is susceptible of illustration, but it is above ornament. It may be so held to the light as to enable us to examine it advantageously, but a gilded casing would not befit it.

The author, in the first chapter, having in a general way set forth his subject, in the second chapter takes up this specific topic,—*Christian Privilege, or the highest Attainable*

*Moral and Spiritual Excellence.* In the commencement of the chapter he gives a very succinct statement of the different theories, both philosophical and religious, which have been propagated. This grouping together of these theories enables the reader to discern the beauty and harmony of the true, and the deformity and deficiency of the false,—a most happy method of exhibiting truth. In giving his own views, the author shows the difference between justification and sanctification. He does not, however, depreciate the former in order to exalt the latter. They are not rival but mutual truths. They are not conflicting graces, struggling for pre-eminence in the heart, but harmonious graces,—the grace of regeneration leading to the grace of sanctification, and sanctification perfecting what is begun in regeneration. It is not therefore necessary to lower the one in order to elevate the other. The glories of the latter are so excelling that it is not necessary to obscure the real glories of the former to render them visible. In stating the nature of this attainment the author has not so sublimated and etherealized it as to make sincere inquirers utterly despair of attaining it. Neither has he so simplified and explained away the subject of sanctification as to lead ordinary believers to say, The state is so little in advance of what I now enjoy that I feel no great concern about it. These extremes have been carefully avoided. I will ask the candid reader of this chapter to mark what is said of the effect of sanctification upon character. From not understanding this, most unfortunate mistakes have occurred. Let the point be well considered. A correct understanding of it will aid us greatly in judging of our own experience, and appreciating the Christian character of others. This chapter concludes with a most pungent appeal to the reader to become holy,—

by grace, through faith in Christ, immediately to attain to the highest moral and spiritual excellence.

The object of the third chapter is, to prove the attainableness of the state of grace presented and illustrated in the preceding one. This is, therefore, a chapter of engrossing interest. Is the beautiful theory of holiness exhibited a true one? Is the blessed experience of moral purity described a real one? May all Christians understand this subject, and enjoy this felicity, in this life? Who can answer these questions satisfactorily? What authority can determine them infallibly and eternally, beyond doubt and beyond controversy? Every pious heart will say, let me hear the voice of God in response to these inquiries. Nothing but a "Thus saith the Lord," can remove all my doubts and confirm my faith. In reading this chapter your utmost wish may be gratified. The author invokes no other authority, consults no other oracle. He rests the entire question upon the Scriptures of Divine truth. By an ingenious yet simple and ample collation of Scripture proofs, he has demonstrated the truthfulness of his doctrines. He has done more: he has shown most conclusively, that this is the great object and aim of the Gospel economy; that for this purpose Christ died, the Holy Scriptures were given, the means of grace instituted, and the offices and agency of the Holy Ghost furnished. Verily no one can carefully consider these Scripture arguments and not feel in his heart that "It is the will of God, even his sanctification."

The author, in his intense desire to leave no lingering doubt upon any mind, to remove every stumbling-block out of the way of every person, and to hold up the truth in undimmed effulgence to every beholder, devotes the fourth chapter to answers to the various objections which have

been (sometimes honestly and sometimes captiously) urged against the doctrine of Christian holiness, as he inculcates it. These objections are candidly stated, calmly considered, and fully answered. The reader will find in this chapter an able exegesis of those passages of Scripture which have been supposed to teach a different doctrine from the one set forth in this treatise. The harmony of the Scriptures on this subject is made most manifest.

Most of the readers who have progressed through a careful examination of these several chapters, will be led with more or less anxiety to inquire, How is this great good to be obtained? How is this rich grace to be sought and realized? We believe many of those who have read the portions of the book already noticed, will ask these questions with trembling concern, with burdened hearts. The author has anticipated the uprising of these questions in the minds of his readers at this point, and in the next chapter furnishes his answer. Probably no portion of the work will be read more frequently, or with more intense concern, or greater profit than this. Fisher Ames, in his funeral eulogium upon Hamilton, states, that that illustrious orator made his discourses complete maps of his subjects. The subject of this chapter is, the way of attaining Christian holiness. The author's map exhibits the way of faith in Christ. Then the several stand-points on the road, and the different stages of progress are carefully noted. The dangerous diverging paths are also faithfully exhibited. Still the way is not, in itself, a difficult, tedious, and tiresome one. It is not a long, weary, and perilous pilgrimage, to travel the whole length of it. For though the distance may actually be considerable, yet the facilities furnished for transporting us over it enable us to pass it very quickly. The grace of God, like

telegraph electricity, almost annihilates distance, as to time. We are sanctified by grace through faith—therefore it may be now. That blood which cleanses from all sin has been shed; Christ ever lives to intercede for those who seek its application; the Holy Spirit waits to aid them in their exercises, and to transform them into the Divine nature and image; all things are ready,—consequently, whosoever exercises the faith described in this chapter will enter into the fruition of holiness.

The sixth chapter explains the evidences of entire sanctification. These are the direct witness of the Holy Spirit, and the indirect, or inferential and confirmatory evidences of its fruits. Certainly a state of grace so exalted and blessed, is not without its corresponding manifestations. It is reasonable here to expect the richest, ripest, and most luxuriant and luscious fruits found in the garden of the Lord. We ask the reader's attention to the distinctiveness of these evidences—or their variations from the evidences of justification—as the author has stated them.

The seventh chapter is one of great practical importance. It discusses these two topics—How may holiness be retained, and, when lost, how may it be regained? Few, if any, writers have treated these topics specifically and formally. And yet how vast their importance! Nearly, or perhaps all, evangelical Churches have their books of counsel and admonition, and encouragement for young converts. They are entering upon a new life, assuming new responsibilities and duties, and going into new scenes and untried circumstances; and all feel that they should share, in a special degree, the sympathies and assistances of the Church, and pre-eminently so of their pastors. But who has evinced a corresponding interest in behalf of those who

are just entering upon the enjoyment, the profession, and the practice of holiness? Are there no special responsibilities devolving upon them? Are there not temptations and trials in their path? Will no evil one seek to rob them of this richer treasure? Will no malicious foe seek to cast them down from this loftier eminence? Such persons are still in probation; they are still encompassed with infirmities; they are still surrounded with wily and potent enemies; they will have an additional and new class of temptations to contend with; they will be called to a new and higher series of exercises, both of heart and life, and, consequently, will need all the aids which the entire economy of the Gospel provides and permits. How kind and useful then is the office of one who is experimentally and practically acquainted with all the peculiarities of this station, to furnish to all who will receive them, such warnings, and directions, and exhortations as are needful and appropriate! This has been done by Mr. Foster in this chapter, with an affectionate pastoral spirit, and with great plainness, and considerable minuteness. I regard this as a very important service to the cause of Christian holiness, and one that gives to this book much of its intrinsic value.

The next effort of the author, is to show the insufficiency of the supposed or real hinderances to the attainment and permanent enjoyment of this grace. So clear and searching has been the investigation of these, that no reader can fail to see that there is nothing insurmountable in his difficulties—consequently no sufficient reason why he should not seek and possess the blessing. Having brought his reader to this inevitable conviction, he now plies his understanding, and conscience, and heart, with the mighty motives of truth and love, to bring him to a prompt, determined, and suc-

cessful pursuit of this high and glorious attainment. In this appeal to the reader to seek holiness, the transcendent and entrancing glories of the subject itself, are held up to win and allure to its pursuit. The authority of God, rightfully and positively requiring it, is urged. It is represented as the great pre-requisite for eminent usefulness. And the exigencies of the Church are shown to demand such usefulness of all her members, and the glory of God to require it of all his people. The eternal interests involved are pressed upon the attention. This appeal is forcible, fervent, eloquent, searching, startling. O! I pray that it may awake multitudes to the high destiny of holiness on earth, and its eternal beatitude in heaven!

The concluding chapter is taken up with general and particular advices to Christians, whether in the enjoyment of holiness or otherwise. These counsels are exceedingly pertinent and timely. They are highly instructive and interesting. They make a beautiful conclusion to this interesting volume. I conclude this introduction by expressing the hope, that every one that reads it, will also read, with candour and much prayer, the entire volume. I have noticed some parts more particularly than others, but all should be read. Study the book as a whole. If you find some things which you cannot approve, we are certain you will find much to admire, and much that will contribute to your religious edification. EDMUND S. JANES.

*New-York, March 18th*, 1851.

# CHRISTIAN PURITY.

## CHAPTER I.

### TO THE READER.

#### THE OCCASION, NATURE, AND OBJECT OF THE WORK.

"THE things which are seen" need no apologist to urge their claims upon our attention, no dulcet tones to conciliate our esteem. Alas! They plead for their own, with an eloquence but too fatal—they find in us hearts but too easily charmed with the spell-like plea.

It is not so with the higher interests of the invisible. Lying beneath the surface, and shut away from view by outward objects, undetected, for the most part, and unknown, the most persuasive eloquence—the most earnest entreaties gain for them but a reluctant hearing, and awaken, on their behalf, but a transient concern. It matters not though they be of infinite and unspeakable value, like diamonds, which glitter in ocean caverns, their existence is veiled, and their beauty and wealth uncoveted! A dewdrop sparkling on the rosebud, awakens more admiration than the priceless stone which lies concealed amid its roots—the tinselled splendours of an earthly palace, have more power on the earth-born than the undying radiance of a heavenly mansion. The body, which hastens to corruption, finds a prompt and obsequious attention to its

meanest want—the soul, image of the Ineffable, pleads in vain for momentary heed to interests vast as the Infinite, and enduring as the Eternal!

A main object of the present volume is to promote these greater, but strangely, disastrously, neglected concerns—the concerns of the invisible and future—of the soul and eternity.

Despairing to gain the ear or eye of mere earth-worms, we address ourselves to Christians, and others, who, like them, begin to appreciate spiritual things—and would point out to them the exuberance and richness of their privilege—the glory and excellence of the objects after which they aspire—even the utmost of the great things, included in the promises made to their faith. We mean not now what is reserved for them in the coming glory, but what pertains to them in this life. Of the former we remember it is said, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him." Let them remain a secret until we enter in, and behold with open vision; we would not fore-cast a refulgence so glorious—eternity alone will serve to unfold it!

Precisely what is the privilege of believers, as to spiritual attainments in this life, is obviously an exceedingly interesting and transcendently momentous question. It can scarcely be pondered too earnestly, or thought of too profoundly. For a time, as it has been heretofore, it may be overlooked; amid the all-engrossing and overshadowing urgencies of the exterior and sensible, it may be obscured and kept out of view; but its importance will yet be admitted, and the wonder of on-coming ages will be, that it was ever neglected—that inferior things, even trifles, were allowed to usurp its

place. As things hurry on to the consummation, and the conflicts of truth with error become more general and engaging, and as each truth assumes its legitimate rank in the great chain of verities, this one will be seen occupying a peerless eminence, and exerting a commanding influence. Other engrossing questions will sink down, and from having swayed a world's heart and mind will elicit no more than a transient glance—a passing thought. This one will rise up, and the same world which had neglected it will do it homage.

What the gospel proposes as the privilege of the race—what it promises to do for the great aggregate of collective humanity, particularly as it respects moral and spiritual improvement, must, in connexion with the above, become the question, which, by force of irresistible attraction, will draw all minds and sway all hearts. Philosophers and poets, statesmen and scholars, as well as divines and religionists, will do it homage; and the collective intelligence of the world will accord it attention. The physical man has had his day—a day of darkness and debasement, of sensualism and crime; the intellectual man is now enjoying his—a day of refulgence and splendour; the spiritual man, will have his. It is now in the dawn. The on-coming of its glory is but a little in the future. Destiny is evidently rushing upon us. All things tend in rapid convergence to some grand and glorious ultimatum. Science moves with quicker pace—art advances with firmer step—learning embraces wider survey—truth comes forth with increasing brilliancy—all things hurry onward, as with the pomp of a cavalcade, the rush of a host, to some grand and glorious completion. The moral elements are in portentous motion. Borne along upon the resistless and excited current, one cannot but in-

quiringly ask, and prophetically anticipate, what the end will be. If he penetrate beneath the thin exterior crust, into the discovery of hidden causes, he must soon perceive what is entirely obvious, that the great agency impelling the world forward with such momentum, is none other than the spirit of Christianity—the omnipotence of the Gospel. Here are the interior sources of that matchless energy, stirring and heaving all around him; here the agency infusing the awakening spirit—evoking the resistless agitation—breaking the death-like spell of ages—and kindling the central fires which cause the great heart of the world to throb and palpitate, with a living excitement, quickening to the extremest fibre, and sending the life current to the remotest nerve. He will see in the gospel the elements of the world's regeneration; and in surrounding phenomena, predictive foreshadowings of the on-coming and never-ending glories, of a reign of righteousness and peace, in which the knowledge of God shall fill the earth, and the moral perturbations of the race give place to quietness and assurance forever.

It might be an interesting exercise to push further, this excursion of incidental thought—to unfold more fully, as we think might be done, what the consummation in these respects will be; nor would the adventure be void of profit. We should find much in the survey to cheer us on—much to excite us to new and nobler endeavour—much to inspire hope, enkindle courage, and awaken adoring love. We should hear voices calling, and behold hands beckoning us onward. Our hearts would leap within us, as we beheld the long night of the world's sorrow and guilt, rolling backward, and succeeding to it the effulgence of a day of rapture and innocence. But interesting and even profitable as it might be, to indulge in these connexions, it is aside from

our plan. Our inquiries lead us in another direction, if not so refulgent, certainly of infinitely more practical importance. *What does the Gospel propose to us as our present personal privilege?* What, as to moral and spiritual excellence, has it *for me, now?* This, in general, is our theme. How obviously important!

If the blessings of the Gospel were unconditional—if without any agency of ours, they were designed to be conferred upon us, we might, in that case, remain contentedly ignorant of our privilege, until we should find ourselves rejoicing in its possession: but if, on the other hand, it has riches to be sought before obtained—blessings to be specifically solicited before given, how manifestly important that we know the value of the treasure, its nature and extent, as well as the mode of its acquisition, that we may be stimulated to the pursuit, and guided in its method! If one knew that his domain embraced a mine of gold containing a million pounds, how much he would value it—how diligently he would seek the embedded treasure! If he supposed it contained no such wealth, it would be comparatively valueless in his eyes, and he would die without exertion. In exact proportion as the blessings of the Gospel are valuable, therefore, is it desirable that we clearly apprehend and definitely understand them. At the present time, particularly, when the mind of the Church is turned, with more than usual interest, to the subject of Christian privilege, and when the hearts of thousands in Christendom are peculiarly awake to it; when inquiry is abroad, and action is assuming form and direction, it becomes of deeper and wider consequence than ever before.

To say that the Church is now living, and from the time of the beginning has been living, beneath her privilege—be-

low her mission, would certainly be but a mild and moderate though humiliating utterance of the conviction of Christendom. She has not possessed her full heritage. What is true of the aggregate is mournfully true of almost the entire individuality. Individual Christians have fallen below the standard. But few exceptions, comparatively, need, or could in truth or charity, be made. Only one in a multitude, with mightier impulse and greater faith than his fellows, has nobly dared to brook the difficulties, and go up to the possession of the entire promises. These stand as so many pyramids of light—as examples of the power of faith—amid surrounding sterility and desolation; and at the same time are standing memorials to the Church of her privilege, and reproving admonitors of her inexcusable shortcoming. Why is this? Why, at least, has there not been in the general experience of the Church a respectable approximation to her privilege? Why has she so long, and so almost universally, remained content with an inferior piety? I know not what response will come to your mind. A very plain and obvious one comes to mine. It is not alone, or even chiefly because of the influence of exterior things. These outward impediments, united with the almost invincible depravity of our nature, have doubtless contributed to the result. But greater than these have been the conjoint hindrances arising, first, from an inadequate apprehension of privilege, and second, as growing out of the first, insufficient impulse or effort after full attainment. To these two disastrous causes, we must believe, mainly may be attributed the deplorably defective piety of the Church from the beginning—deplorably defective in comparison with what it should have been. Some, in each age, have surmounted these—have attained to clearer views, to stron-

ger impulses, and their advancement has exceeded in the same ratio. Privilege, on the whole, however, has not been exhibited with sufficient clearness and fulness—duty has not been enforced with adequate earnestness and impressiveness; and so the Church, embodying the great mass of the membership, has been left content with a comparatively sickly and dwarfish experience, inferior to her necessities, and below her wants. There may have been, and doubtless has been, on the part of most Christians, a vague and indefinite idea of greater blessings, not yet included in their experience, and a general outgoing of heart after them: but there has been so much indefiniteness, as to awaken neither hope nor concern; and if these in some instances have been awakened for a time, they have too often perished for want of guidance and support.

Since writing the above, I find the following upon the same point, from the pen of a contemporary, elegantly expressing the same sentiment. "There is much in the present condition of the Churches, and much in the present aspects of the world, that makes this progressive energy of Christianity a lesson, needing now especially to be urged by the teacher and heeded by the disciples of this faith. The Church, we said, needs in this age to be kept in mind of the great truth, that there remains much land yet to be possessed, not only as the common heritage of the faithful, but as the personal allotment and homestead, so to speak, of each one of the faithful. The Churches, rediscovering a long-neglected duty, are now attempting to evangelize the heathen: it is an age of missions. The islands of the Pacific have heard the cry, after the lapse of eighteen centuries, that our earth has been honoured and blest by the coming of a Redeemer. China has shuddered to see the long do-

minion of her Confucius and her Boodh invaded by the Gospel of Jesus the Nazarene. The shasters of Brahminism find their sacred Sanscrit tongue employed by the diligence and fidelity of missionary translators, to utter the oracles of that one true God, who will banish from under the heavens, which they have not made, and which He has made, all the hundred thousand gods of the Hindoo Pantheon, with all the other idols of the nations, however ancient and however popular. The tinglings of a new life from on high seem, along the coasts of Asia and of Africa, shooting into nations that Paganism held for centuries senseless and palsied. Is not Ethiopia soon to be, as the prophetic eye of the Psalmist long ages ago saw her, stretching out her hands unto God? But whilst each Christian Church, each band of spiritual disciples, in lands long evangelized, is thus lengthening the cords of her tent to take in the Gentiles under its broad canopy, she must, in consequence, and, as it were, in counterpoise of the extension, strengthen her stakes at home to bear the increased tension, and the extended shelter. Her supports must be proportionably augmented at home by a deepening piety, and a steadier vigour of principle in her discipleship, or the work will soon come to a stand abroad. A sickly and bedwarfed Christianity will not furnish the requisite labourers or the needful funds. Expansion without solidity will bring upon our Zion the ruin of the arch unduly elongated and heavily over-loaded. Christendom itself must be more thoroughly Christianized before Heathendom will relinquish its old character and worship, and learn our creed and love our Saviour.

"Were there no other precept of that tenor, the single utterance of our God, 'Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect,' would be suffi-

cient to show how a limitless growth and expansion of our intellectual and moral stature was set before us in the Gospel. The utterance was a part of the Sermon on the Mount. The morality there taught, and which has smitten infidels with admiration, goes beyond—far beyond—that temporal and secular order to which they would limit it. To man, the heir of immortality, it prescribes the law, and warrants the hope of an immortal progression—a progression of which time is but the starting point, and eternity the long career, and God the unsearched and ever-ascending goal of its endless and jubilant ascent. The mistakes and crude hopes of the irreligious, and the peculiar dangers and duties environing the religious men and women of our times, should alike enforce this great principle. It is written again and again over the New Testament. The Chief Master and Apostle of our profession prayed for his people, that his joy might remain in them, and that their joy might be full in keeping his commandments, and that thus their Father and His Father might be glorified in their 'bearing much fruit.' Complete and final as was their justification, when once believing in Him, whose sacrifice and work made an end of sin, and brought in an everlasting righteousness, their sanctification was but initial, and was to continue progressive, ascending from grace to grace, and even when culminating in the invisible glory, it was even there to know, through the long lapse of an eternity, an intenser glow of love, and to scan a widening horizon of knowledge, and to evolve a higher grade of holiness, as the dread, glad perfection of their Father God loomed on them more vastly, and shone on them more nearly and more clearly."—*Rev. William R. Williams.*

I cannot forbear in this connexion to present my readers

with a thrilling paragraph from the pen of that strong thinker and nervous writer, Dr. Olin, bearing directly upon this subject. Speaking of the young men of the present age, he says, and the remark is applicable to all, as illustrating the responsibilities devolving upon us, with respect to all the accumulated interests of our day, civil, moral, and religious. "Something more than this will be justly expected of them. It is the glory of the men of the present generation that they have improved upon all past ages, and greatly enriched and beautified the inheritance which their fathers bequeathed them. It will be the undying reproach of their successors if this full tide of improvement shall be stayed upon their accession to the high places of power and respectability. They will enter upon their career with peculiar advantages. The accumulations of past ages constitute their resources for new enterprises. The light of rich and varied experiments shines full upon their pathway, and the wonderful discoveries of the last half century constitute the vantage-ground from which they are allowed to commence their new career. If, with facilities so many and so great, unknown to their predecessors, they shall do no more than maintain the actual status of the intelligence, and happiness, and virtue of the community, they are destined to act but an inglorious part. They ought to contribute to the welfare of society such measures of new light, and vivacity, and momentum, as will quicken and multiply the energies of every ameliorating enterprise. This is their proper function and vocation, for which they should diligently equip themselves as champions whose eyes are already fixed upon the arena of the coming conflict.

"The actual state of education, morals, and happiness in a community, may be regarded as the true expression of

the power of the moral and intellectual forces engaged for its improvement. The efficiency and usefulness of a Church, for instance, are precisely what the zeal, purity, and intelligence of its members can make it. We may conclude, therefore, that the Christian enterprises of the present time must remain stationary, without some new accession of moral resources. If the rising generation shall come forward with only the same degree of piety and intelligence that belong to their fathers, then the utmost that can be expected is, that the cause of religion and humanity shall not retrograde. Progress, under the circumstances supposed, is wholly out of the question. The Church is now barely able to hold its ground against the opposing forces of sin and error, or to advance with a tardy step to future triumphs; and if it is to be recruited and reinforced by such members and ministers only as already wield its destinies, it must remain in essentially the same condition, while the accession of even a few persons of deeper piety, and stronger faith, and larger views, might sweep away the obstacles that retard its progress, and open a career of unexampled success. A single individual of enlarged conceptions of duty and burning zeal for Christ, is sometimes able to communicate new spirit to a whole church which has, for years, scarcely given a sign of vitality. It had just enough of moral power to maintain a bare existence, and resist the pressure from without; and now the additional impetus given by one true man of God puts everything in motion and triumphs over obstacles. What victories then might we not anticipate, what enlargement for Zion, could the whole host of our young men [the whole Church] be induced to gird themselves with strength, and enter upon the whitening field to which they are called, with something like the

spirit of primitive Christianity? It would be as new life from the dead. It would be as the birth of a new dispensation. They who are ready to perish would revive again, and all the islands of the sea would rejoice.

"Manifestly it is such a revival of heavenly charity, and wisdom, and apostolic zeal, that is imperatively demanded by the present condition of all our social and Christian enterprises. The passing era will ever be recognised in history as an age of noble conceptions, and of great moral convictions. It has planned and begun to execute godlike enterprises, but it evidently lacks the sinews needful for their successful accomplishment. It reels under the burden it has assumed. The existing race of Christians has propagated sublime ideas, which it is appointed for their successors to realize in sublime achievements. This is in accordance with a great law. An age of discovery leads in an age of performance. First comes the science, and then its application to life. The Church is well-furnished with grand ideas. It has on its hands comprehensive evangelizing schemes, whose successful accomplishment will usher in the millennium. What she now wants is agents to execute them. She wants an army of young men, [Christians of all ages,] large-minded and large-hearted, and deeply baptized into the Saviour's spirit. This is the great want to which all others are subordinate. Let it be supplied, and all other obstacles will vanish away. The cause of Christ and humanity calls for men —needs men—cultivated, sanctified, self-sacrificing, brave men, and it really wants nothing else to the completeness of its triumphs. Material resources, with which the Church overflows, only wait for the bidding of lips touched with holy fire to call them forth upon the altar of sacrifice. And now what Christian young man [or old man] will

endure the thought, that all these godly enterprises, for the improvement and salvation of the race, shall fail or languish for want of worthy champions. The Church has just now started forth from the ignominious repose of centuries, and trembles to recognise itself as charged by Christ with the evangelization of the world. Shall this work, so nobly begun, fail or languish for want of labourers?"—for want of that entireness of consecration to the cause which its magnitude demands?

This article, though addressed to young men with respect to their peculiar responsibilities, admirably sets forth the want and responsibility of the entire Church—a higher piety and more entire devotion—in other words, the sanctification of Christians. Let the Church attain to this—let Christians claim their privileges and come up to the standard, and the world will be a speedy and easy conquest. These enlightened and noble views cannot produce an undue impression upon the minds of the present generation of Christians.

We repeat it, then, how important that Christians have full and truthful views of the extent of their privilege, and of the nature and kind of their obligations in regard to it! If there be one want of Christendom, at this time, greater than all others, it is this. There is learning—there is piety—there is zeal—in our belief there was never more, perhaps never so much. Certain it is there was never so much needed; but there is still more wanted than extraordinary learning, piety, and zeal. It is that entire consecration, that higher development of the Christian life throughout the entire Church, which can never take place until she sees the fulness of her privilege, and the terribleness of her obligations. With low, or even medium views of her privilege

and duty, she can never pass into that higher life, that "fulness of the blessing of the Gospel," that "unity of the faith," that dwelling in God, which she must attain before the world becomes regenerate through her instrumentality. We may erect churches—found charities—educate ministers—employ missionaries—print Bibles—extend far and wide all these and a thousand other appliances for the good and redemption of the race; but, though we may do incalculable good by such means, we shall fall painfully short of the glorious mission of our Christianity, if we fail ourselves to see, and if we fail to make the world see, that sublime, that almost Divine, spiritual perfection she places within our reach, and holds out in invitation to us. Christianity possesses inferior and superior blessings—it may exist in inferior and superior degrees of development. What the world wants, what the Church wants, is Christianity in all of its fulness: then, and not till then, "shall the wilderness and the solitary place be glad, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose." Let it not be inferred that we depreciate the ordinary but genuine experience of the Church, the common grade of Christian grace; but allowing it all the value it can have, we only say it does not exhaust our claim—there are still greater blessings in store for us; and the greatest good of ourselves and of the race, requires that we should not stop short of our entire privilege. The time has come when we need to ascend, to press up to a higher, healthier, and purer experience—from the inferior to the superior walks.

But where the need of another book? Allowing the importance of the subject, its constantly increasing moment, and its urgency, particularly at the present time; yet has not enough been written, and well and ably written upon

it? We have the works of Mr. Wesley, and Fletcher—Mr. Watson and Bates—Peck, Merritt; the devout works of Baxter, Owen, and others. Are not these sufficient? What more need be done but to distribute these abroad, and cause them to speak, until Christendom shall arise and gird herself? That these have respectively done noble service to the cause, there can be no question, "Many stars, we doubt not, will brighten in their crowns of rejoicing forever." Let the Church be grateful, that God, at needful intervals, has in mercy raised up such minds to enlighten and bless his people. We rejoice to believe they have opened up currents of influence and usefulness which will continue to flow on, to the refreshing of Zion, long after they enter into rest, through the on-coming ages of time.

Were these universally read, less occasion perhaps would exist for additional volumes on the same subject. And yet even if extensively read, if generally studied, they do not supersede the usefulness of other works. Though excellent, and in the main unobjectionable, it may be entirely unobjectionable, still other minds may conceive of the same truths in a manner, and present them in a form, which will facilitate their influence and prevalence, and, at the same time, be equally unobjectionable. Though truth is ever the same, circumstances are constantly changing; and that presentation of truth which precisely met the want of a former age or a certain place, may not so completely fill the demand of another period and different locality. The altered circumstances, now and yonder, call for a new and additional presentation of the old and unaltered truth. Error is a Proteus, ever assuming new forms, and attacking truth under fresh disguises. It is necessary, therefore, to repeat the exhibition of truth in a manner suited to meet these varied attacks, and

expose these recurring and slightly shifted deceptions. These, with one additional consideration, are our apology for offering the Church and all serious and reflecting men the present treatise. The additional consideration is this: after all that has been said and written, neither the world nor the Church is fully awake to duty. The work is not yet done. There are remaining errors in theory and practice—in faith and experience; and so long as this remains a truth, there will continue a call for additional effort.

It may be proper further and more explicitly to state here, that it is no part of our object to present a new theory, not even an improvement or essential modification of an old one; but simply to educe, in somewhat different form, what has been exhibited by others in our standards from time to time. Gaining this, we shall have accomplished our highest aim. They, therefore, who seek for novel and startling speculations—who find pleasure only in the adventurous and rash—who delight to see the ancient and respectable torn ruthlessly away, to make place for the unfledged and irresponsible—need expect no entertainment in the following pages. For such minds we have no fancy to write. But to the candid and truth-seeking and truth-loving—to the serious and thoughtful, who value truth more than singularity, we submit this our humble effort to do good; hoping that they will find both entertainment and profit in its perusal. A word to such, and we proceed directly to our work. We are all liable, in regard to every subject, to be unduly influenced by prejudice, swayed by pre-conceptions arising from habit, constitution, education, association, and other causes. The blinding influence of these is obvious, all around us and within us, every hour. How great the heroism and pre-eminent the moral courage which completely

exorcises and casts them out of the mind! How indispensable to the highest success that this be done! No one can properly investigate a subject, or even successfully examine the researches of another, until his mind, in relation to truth, is as the needle to the pole—ready to follow it whatever its direction—ready to settle upon it, however different from all its former opinions or long cherished preferences.

With regard to the particular subject considered in the following pages, it may be that some of our readers, from the influence of causes unknown, have imbibed prejudices —prejudices exerting an undetected, but fatal power upon their whole religious character and progress—blinding them to privilege and restraining them from duty—limiting their usefulness, and diminishing their enjoyments! Is it so? Will the reader make inquisition; and with a noble, Christian sincerity, worthy of himself and worthy of the magnitude of the truth involved, give himself to its discovery and open his heart to its divine impression.

It is the desire of the author in the preparation of this work, to promote the great cause of holiness in the earth; believing that he who does this is a permanent benefactor of the race. And remembering that God's children are scattered throughout the entire Church, in all the denominational divisions, it will be his effort to avoid all allusions having a tendency to inflict needless pain upon any, and at the same time to assist all in the glorious work of their common mission—the building up of Christ's kingdom in the world, "and spreading Scriptural holiness over these, *over all* lands." We shall, indeed, give our own views fully and undisguisedly, but without entering at all into merely sectarian contentions, or attempting to secure denominational

aims. We write for Christians, without respect to name; with no thought whatever of their peculiar badge, and with no desire to affect their particular church relations; but purely to assist them in the great matter of Christian experience. Here we have a common interest, and may, without infringing personal or denominational rights, be "co-workers together," advising, comforting, reproving, and exhorting each other, and so "provoking each other to love and good works."

We are, indeed, and we think profitably, under existing circumstances, distinguished by various appellatives and diversified usages and symbols; but our foundation, our faith, our experience, our hope, our heaven, is one. Children of one Father—ransomed by one Saviour—renewed by one Holy Spirit—and going forward to one everlasting home. We can but feel a fraternal sympathy; and overlooking all petty distinctions, must delight to recognise the invisible bond of a glorious and divine brotherhood—the union and fellowship of hearts! A few more revolving suns and we shall "see eye to eye," and "know as we are known." Dropping, with our clay, the infirmities that in any degree sundered us, and leaving our names and badges in the grave, we shall flow together and mingle as sunbeams amid the radiance of heaven. One song will gladden our hearts, one temple resound with our praises, and one God be our "all in all." What remains but that *now*, in anticipation of the future union, we "bear each other's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ," and help each other to "work out our salvation," meanwhile looking unto God, "who worketh in us to will and to do of his good pleasure?" If we shall succeed in shedding a single beam upon the path of the most humble pilgrim, or in opening up a rill of plea-

sure to any of God's children, or otherwise encouraging the faith of Christians, we shall feel that we have not laboured in vain in the Lord.

The subject upon which we are about to enter is quite as ample as important. To unfold it fully, in all of its connexions, would require elaborate preliminary discussions—discussions embracing a wide range of topics, and reaching downward to the very foundations of theology. However this might accord with our personal preferences, or please a portion of our readers, we are quite sure it would defeat our cardinal object, which is to do the greatest good to the greatest number. We must therefore content ourselves and indulge our friends with a direct and restricted treatise. The same consideration will likewise modify our style and mode. Aiming mainly at a practical result, we shall not seek either to be learnedly critical or rigidly systematic. Rather it will be our effort to render what, to many minds, is perplexed and mystified, plain and familiar; referring, as occasion may require, both to the word of God, which is religion in teaching, and to Christian experience, which is religion in practice, for the illustration and corroboration of our views. This is what the mass of Christian mind wants; not theory in the abstract—not speculation—not philosophy—but simply practical Gospel truth, so presented as to interest the understanding and move the heart—*privilege unfolded* and *duty enforced!*

Fully awake to the magnitude of the work we have thus briefly indicated, we shall proceed with prayerful and earnest looking to God for illumination, and with diligent study of his word as our guide to its execution; not presuming to hope that we shall succeed to the utmost of our wishes, nor yet allowing ourselves to despair of, at least, doing some good.

May the great Head of the Church—the Eternal Source of all truth and illumination to his people—who hath so wonderfully enriched his servants, ancient and modern, with the spirit of wisdom and faith, and a sound mind—grant unto us his holy guidance, and so control our thoughts and pen, as to cause what may be written to redound to his glory and our reciprocal good; and, finally, when we shall have been sanctified by grace, bring both writer and reader to that "heaven" in which "dwelleth righteousness," "God" himself being "the light of it!"

## CHAPTER II.

### CHRISTIAN PRIVILEGE, OR THE HIGHEST ATTAINABLE MORAL AND SPIRITUAL EXCELLENCE DESCRIBED.

In discussing the subject indicated by the heading of this chapter, we shall encounter a number of variant and contradictory theories—theories occupying the widest extremes as well as almost every conceivable intervening shade. It will, I am certain, assist us to a clearer and more satisfactory discovery of the exact truth, if we present the various theories, and discriminate their specific differences. It can be done in a small space. By this method our readers will be enabled to compare them, determine their relative merits, and choose among them all, what of truth they respectively possess.

In pursuing this course we may seem to commence far behind the immediate object of our treatise; but the attentive reader will soon perceive, that in doing so we have not been indifferent to his interest. In some cases it is important, that the mind have all the views of a subject—in others a single view is sufficient: as the beauty of some landscapes may be seen from a single stand-point, whilst others require to be studied from different positions. In some instances, one view of truth is so strong, so manifestly correct, that the mind involuntarily rests, assured that it need look no further. In other cases it is not so forcibly seized—a number of views crowd upon it, requiring tedious comparison, or, at least, particular notice, before it can resolve with entire satisfaction which, among the plausible multitude, is more truthful than the others.

It is not an unusual circumstance, that objects contemplated at a great distance apart, or at different periods, leave the mind undecided with regard to them—we read a book now, twenty years hence we read another on the same subject—we cannot decide which possesses the greater merit. We see a painting from the pencil of a distinguished artist; we pass away, and in a week hence behold, amid another collection, the best performance of a rival—we cannot determine between them: bring the objects immediately together, and one is astonished that he should ever have been, for a moment, in a state of indecision. It is thus, sometimes, with rival views of truth, with contending theories; all that is necessary to decide the mind in regard to them is to behold them in juxtaposition. What would have seemed plausible enough, presented to the mind alone, and perhaps have met an unquestioned reception, when exhibited together with another and antagonistic view, is promptly rejected. Mere statement, unaccompanied with elaborate argument, is of incalculable service in the discovery of truth.

Let us now, therefore, furnish a succinct statement of the various theories in answer to the question, What is the highest attainable moral and spiritual excellence in this life? And as it will not greatly add to the compass of the statement, and yet may be both interesting and useful to the reader, we may present, in company with the theological or Christian views, the philosophical and semi-religious theories.

1. Beginning with the extreme view in one direction, we find a sect of philosophical speculators who answer it thus: "Man has no spiritual character. Purely a material being, under the inexorable despotism of fate, neither his actions

nor affections can be said to be right or wrong, good or bad. The offspring of necessity himself, without his consent or agency, and the whole phenomena of his life—the outward and actual, no less than the inward and emotional—but a chain of unavoidable sequences, he cannot be said to possess either merit or demerit, any more than the vegetable organism, or the unreflecting brute." This school of materialistic fatalists, always few and never respectable, may be said to have descended to the lowest possible level in their speculations about morals. From this deep abysmal platform other schemes rise up in successive gradations, approximating, then reaching, and finally, to as great an extreme on the other hand, transcending the truth.

2. Another class, like the one already quoted, assuming rather a philosophical than religious *style*, go somewhat beyond their brethren in their admissions. They allow moral character to human actions, but disallow it to the affections; while, at the same time, they leave it extremely questionable whether they allow a proper spiritual soul to man, or, like those named above, reduce him to a mere material organism. According to their view, the sum of a man's outward actions makes up the texture of his moral and, as far as he possesses any, of his spiritual character, without any regard whatever to his internal sentiments, emotions, affections, or even intentions. These allow some progress in moral excellence, but, of course, only with respect to outward actions; here, indeed, it may be the greatest imaginable, varying from the extremes of the most abandoned dissoluteness to the highest and most unexceptionable morality. The inward life being without moral character—according to the theory all states being of the same negative kind—here, there can be no improvement, one state differing nothing in moral

tone from another. As a shrub, which is without moral character, makes no advance or retrogression in moral excellence when it blooms in the spring or decays in the autumn; so the inward life of man, being also without moral character, neither advances nor retrogrades, when it passes from one extreme to another in the kind of its affections. Two men who perform the same acts precisely, have precisely the same moral character; though the one, in heart, may be as corrupt as a fiend, and the other as pure as an angel.

3. Next in order is a class assuming the Christian name, but certainly, if entitled to that designation at all, it must be in the lowest possible sense; if allowed to belong to the genus, it must be as the most inferior species, the mere chrysalis of the family. These admit the proper spirituality, and allow of moral character, both with respect to the inward and outward life of man—the actions and affections; and accordingly they admit of progress in moral excellence in both directions, embracing reformation, outward and inward. They do not, however, admit of inward renewal or regeneration—of a change of heart, by which the sources of the affections, which were radically corrupt, become cleansed and purified. They do not receive the doctrine of spiritual depravity, and hence discard the idea of regeneration, not finding it necessary, or even possible, according to their theory. The claim of those holding this view, to be Christians, can only be admitted by finding them to possess in fact what they disclaim in theory, namely, a change of inward nature.

4. Next in order we come to the view maintained in common by all orthodox Christians, of whatever name or sect—the catholic platform upon which they all stand, and whence they unitedly contend for, at least, so much of

"the faith once delivered to the saints:" namely, the belief that man has moral and spiritual character, not only with respect to his actions, but also with respect to his affections, embracing both, and equally his outward conduct and his inward nature; and further, that moral and spiritual progress is possible, not only to the extent of reformation from sinful habits, and pardon for previous guilt, but also to the extent of an inward change, a radical renewal of the inward nature itself, by which the sources of the affections become purified and the man is made, in a certain sense, a new creature.

This, we have said, is the common ground occupied by all evangelical Christians. It may be well to be more particular and full in its statement. Three things are seen to be included in their idea as now expressed:—

1. *Reformation:* which consists in a change, for the better, in outward conduct; "the ceasing to do evil and learning to do well."

2. Pardon for the guilt of former sins, styled *justification.* This is understood, with great unanimity, to mean simply forgiveness, or the removal of the condemnation incurred by past sins, whether of the life or affections. The difference of moral state between a man justified and one not justified is this: both have sinned, it may be equally; but one has renounced his sins and obtained pardon for them, the other retains his, and remains under their guilt and subject to their punishment. In point of fact both are sinners; but in view of certain reasons, the law consents to treat one as though he were not a sinner, while it holds the other, the same reasons not existing, amenable for his sins.

3. Renewal of the inward nature, styled *regeneration.* This is understood to differ essentially, both from reforma-

tion and justification, though it is supposed always to accompany the latter. The general difference between justification and regeneration is this: the one is a work done for us, the other is a change wrought in us—one is pardon, the other is renewal—by one guilt is taken away, by the other the principle of a new life is implanted—one removes condemnation, the other removes corruption—one affects the relation, the other affects the nature—in justification God consents to regard the sinner, for Christ's sake, as though he had not sinned, in regeneration he takes away from his heart "the love of sin," and imparts to him a new class of affections and dispositions, the principle of a new life, which gives him power over sin. Renewal or regeneration being a concomitant of pardon, or invariably occurring in connexion with it, in common Christian parlance the two are represented by the one term justification—a soul forgiven and renewed is said to be justified.

To this grade of moral and spiritual character, all evangelical Christians believe it is possible to attain—nay, not only possible, but indispensable to present and final salvation. Nothing short of it entitles to the Christian name—nothing less admits into the Divine family. There may be slight variety in the idioms of sects—in the nomenclature of denominations—in the spoken and written parlance of the schools in theology; but in regard to the thing itself, there is no difference—there is entire harmony.

But now right here, starting from this common centre, as to what is the specific degree of attainment implied in justification and regeneration, and as to whether anything more or beyond is attainable in this life, are several divergent theories, more or less essentially dissimilar, and of very great moment indeed. It will, we are persuaded, subserve

a good purpose, to state and classify these divergencies, so as to enable us to ascertain precisely what are the various views entertained, and assist us to choose between them.

1. And first, there is difference of view as to the extent of attainment reached in the experience of justifying and regenerating grace—as to what is the precise spiritual state thereby secured.

(1.) Some contend that the state of character attained in the moment of pardon and regeneration, and procured by them to the believer, is a state of actual holiness—of entire purity—of complete freedom from inbred sin—perfect cleansing from inward, as well as outward corruption and defilement; in other words, that the believer is completely and thoroughly sanctified in the moment when he is justified and renewed.

(2.) Others do not receive this view; and for obvious reasons, as will be shown hereafter. Their idea rather is this: Justification brings to the justified soul an entire pardon for all past sin, a complete deliverance from its guilt, so that no sin remains to condemn him—none will rise up in judgment against him; he is fully and entirely forgiven.

In addition to this they believe, with respect to regeneration, that it is a work done in us, in the way of changing our inward nature: a work by which a spiritual life is infused into the soul, whereby he (the regenerate) brings forth the peaceable fruits of righteousness—has victory over sin—is enabled to resist corrupt tendencies—and has joy and peace in the Holy Ghost; a radical change by which the preponderating tendencies of the soul are turned towards God, whereas they were previously from him—by which the love of sin is destroyed, its dominion broken, and a desire and relish for, and longing after, holiness, implanted.

But they do not believe that, in the soul thus regenerate, entire sanctification has necessarily taken place.

2. In consequence of this difference there are other and very wide divergencies.

(1.) Those of course who take the former view, assuming regeneration to be synonymous with "sanctification"—"entire holiness"—"freedom from all sin"—"perfection"—"purity," do not think that anything more is necessary or possible. Having gained regeneration, they conceive that the highest distinctive attainable state is already reached.

(2.) Those, on the other hand, who take the latter view, that regeneration and sanctification are neither identical nor synchronic, but different and distinct, branch off from this common point into various and widely dissimilar opinions. These diversities may be classified, that a clear view may be obtained, as follows:—

*First.* Some believe, that, though regeneration does not imply sanctification—is not synonymous with it, yet, it is the highest attainable state during this life; accounting it impossible to become entirely sanctified in this world, or until the soul is separate from the body; and further, accounting it certain, that in death all believers will thus be made holy. These do not, of course, think that sanctification is to be sought for in this life; and that, if sought ever so diligently, it is to be obtained.

*Second.* Others still, agreeing with these in the leading idea, that regeneration and sanctification are not identical, do hold that regeneration is sanctification begun, and that sanctification will be completed just before death, by a ripeness and maturity of the graces implanted in the moment of regeneration, and that death ensues immediately when this maturity takes place; because, being thus fitted

for heaven, the soul would not be prevented from entering upon its rest. All believers will live until they ripen into this maturity, and not a moment longer. The difference between these and the former is this: the former hold to a sanctification, supernaturally and directly wrought in death, distinct from regeneration, and as a qualification for heaven; the latter believe sanctification to be a simple maturity of regeneration, attained by growth and time, and that then death ensues to release the purified spirit and remove it to its glorious mansion. Though seemingly small, the difference is really considerable.

*Third.* Still another class differ with both the above: holding with them in common, that regeneration and sanctification are not identical; with the last, that regeneration is sanctification begun, and sanctification regeneration matured or ripened into holiness: but differing with them both, in this respect, that they believe that this maturity may take place long before death, and be enjoyed during life; that a person may attain to a completely sanctified state, and exemplify and enjoy it in this world. In their estimation, sanctification is distinct only as a point in the progress of regeneration, not as a separate and additional work—*attained by gradual growth,* not by direct agency.

*Fourth.* But finally: another class, agreeing with all the former, that sanctification and regeneration are not identical, and, with the two last named, that regeneration is sanctification begun, differ with them all in that they believe sanctification to be an immediate or instantaneous, and distinct work, to be attained by the agency of the Holy Spirit through faith, at any time when the requisite faith is exercised, and to be enjoyed during life:—distinct in opposition to the idea that it is mere regeneration; holding it to be

something more and additional: instantaneous, in opposition to the idea of growth gradually to maturity or ripeness; holding, that though it is maturity of Christian character, ripeness of the graces, and though there is progress towards it, yet that its attainment is not a mere ripeness, ensuing by gradual growth, but is by the direct ageney of the Holy Ghost, and instantaneously wrought in the soul, however long the soul may have been progressing towards it.

With those holding the two views last named there may be a greater or less difference; the real and chief dissimilarity is, as we conceive, in these particulars. 1. They differ in regard to the distinctness of the work. 2. In regard to the process of attaining it. The former regarding the distinctness of the work simply as the ripening of what was before immature; the latter regarding it a distinct work, by a specific agency—of the same nature as the former, but superior and distinct. The former, again, holding that it is a work requiring time and resulting from progress, analogous to the growth of man from infancy to maturity, or the ripening of fruit; the latter admitting that there may be regular progress towards the attainment, but contending that it may be consummated in a moment, and whenever done, must be by specific agency, and therefore discarding the analogy.

These, so far as I know, are the only theories existing on the subject. There may be others, or these may be differently and variously expressed: but after extensive research into published and private views, these are the sum of what I have been enabled to discover. I have endeavoured to express them as plainly as possible, for the edification of all classes of Christians, even those of the humblest attain-

ments. The statements have necessarily been brief and condensed, and there may be consequent obscurity; but with reasonable effort, I think the precise idea we have sought to express will be discovered.

In one thing, the diversified theories all agree, namely, that there is such a thing as sanctification—that it is to be experienced by believers at some time, and by some process, before they are admitted into, and as preparatory for, heaven. They differ mainly as to the time and the manner. Very important points of disagreement indeed—but by no means so important as the points of agreement!

In addition to these points of difference are some other disagreements, as to the precise nature of sanctification, also with respect to the means of its attainment, retainment, and other kindred subjects; these need not be stated here, as they will naturally come up when we come to treat of these subjects specifically.

The various theories are now distinctly before us. Which is true? Or what is the truth among them all? The reader, it may be, has already made up his mind—reached his conclusion. With the rapidity with which genius perceives and appropriates truth, he has resolved the issue, and brought back his verdict. Impatient with the tardy process of weighing reasons, testing differences, and determining evidences, he has rushed to the ultimatum, with sudden and tremendous bounds, and rests secure of his success, without the wear and fatigue of consecutive process. Or, it may be, he has travelled over all the ground, carefully investigated every step, studied all its bearings, and, in the most cautious and safe method, arrived at his final and matured conviction. At all events, his mind is made up. It is well to have a decided mind,—but better to be sure that it is right!

The following pages will be given to a defence of the ultimate theory in the above category. In our deliberate conviction it contains the truth—*it contains nothing but the truth*—IT CONTAINS THE ENTIRE TRUTH!—a truth the most momentous, and also the most glorious in the universe: "Man may be holy and live! Man *must* be holy or he *cannot* live, in the highest sense!"

Before we enter, however, upon the defence of the view we have espoused, having shown the exact particulars in which it diverges from others, it is desirable, *more*, it is important, that we explain more fully our whole and precise understanding of it, in its carrying out and completeness. We assume the practicability of "holiness, sanctification, perfection, purity, freedom from sin," properly so called,—that these terms imply a state, distinct alike from regenera tion and justification, embracing each, and superior to both. Now, how obviously proper the inquiry! Exactly what do we mean by these terms? What is our idea of the state, or work, or experience, or what you please to call it, they describe?

In all utterance and communication of truth, nothing is so desirable as exact understanding—accurate apprehension of the idea. This gained, and many a fierce and unhappy conflict would be foreclosed—many an hour of painful labour saved—much wear of mind and body prevented—and, not improbably, many souls rescued from confusion and bewilderment, leading on to wreck and ruin forever. Time lost in statement, is time gained in the after stages of investigation. Clearness here is better than a thousand arguments. Without this, indeed, every argument and every illustration may tend to deeper mazes, and more inextricable intricacies of confusion and error. What avails argument—what profit is reasoning, if the point discussed be not

clearly apprehended? We are the more anxious that the statement now about to be made, exegetical of our views, should be pondered, because, for some reasons, either in consequence of our obscurity, or because of inattention, or for a want of candour, or from the influence of these causes collectively, remarkable misconceptions and enormous misrepresentations have been made. The doctrine has been distorted and caricatured by enemies, and falsely conceived of, and erroneously embraced by friends. Wordy controversies and unprofitable debate have resulted. The force of momentous truth has been paralyzed; and the most serious and sacred interests have been turned into butts of ridicule, and objects of disgust and contempt. To prevent all reasonable occasion of consequences of this kind; and to make the doctrine understood, believing that when understood it will find ready admission; to harmonize its friends and disarm its enemies, and to impress all Christians, and all candid and sincere minds, who have some appreciation of the blessings of our holy and glorious religion, with its certain truth and surpassing beauty and loveliness, we subjoin a minute and particular statement of our meaning.

And, for greater explicitness, we may give, first, a brief negative view of the subject, showing what we are often supposed to believe, but what we do not believe, in connexion with it.

1. And first: we do not include in our idea of the highest attainable state, or "holiness," infallibility, exemption from errors of judgment—or intellectual perfection of any respect. We constantly admit that these are not to be expected in this life; nay more, we affirm that the most perfect and holy men are always subject to imperfections in these respects, while they remain in the body; liable to be

imposed upon by deceptive appearances—to arrive at false conclusions—to perpetrate incorrect and sophistical reasonings—to be misled by unfaithful memory, illusory observations, erratic imaginations—to form unauthorized surmises and suspicions—to entertain incorrect and even absurd opinions about many things, and to all other sinless mental aberrations and imperfections, incident to humanity in its fallen and degenerate estate. In harmony with this view, Mr. Wesley says: "They," sanctified believers, "are not perfect in knowledge. They are not free from ignorance, no, nor from mistake. We are no more to expect any living man to be infallible, than to be omniscient. They are not free from infirmities, such as weakness or slowness of understanding, irregular quickness or heaviness of imagination. Such in another kind are, impropriety of language, ungracefulness of pronunciation, to which one might add a thousand nameless defects, either in conversation or behaviour. From such infirmities as these none are perfectly freed till their spirits return to God."—*Plain Account*, p. 21. Again, in another connexion, he says: "Do you affirm that this perfection excludes all infirmities, ignorance, and mistake? I constantly affirm quite the contrary, and always have done so. But how can every thought, word, and work, be governed by pure love, and the man be subject at the same time to ignorance and mistake? I see no contradiction here: 'A man may be filled with pure love, and still be liable to mistake.' Indeed, I do not expect to be freed from actual mistakes, till this mortal puts on immortality. I believe this to be a natural consequence of the soul's dwelling in flesh and blood. For we cannot now think at all, but by the mediation of those bodily organs which have suffered equally with the rest of our frame. And hence

we cannot avoid sometimes thinking wrong, till the corruptible shall have put on incorruption."—*Plain Account*, p. 63. *Christian Manual*, p. 12.

2. We do not include in our idea of the highest attainable state, physical perfection. On the contrary, we think it consistent with the greatest bodily infirmity, weakness, disease, deformity, and organic and structural imperfection. These are not looked upon separately, in themselves considered, as affecting, either to completeness or impairing, essential spiritual character. In our code a perfect physical man may be the most imperfect spiritual man, and the most defective physical may be the most complete spiritual.

3. Our idea of perfection does not embrace the idea of perfection of conduct and feeling; that is, it does not suppose that the conduct and feelings will be always free from improprieties and irregularities—infallibly correct and perfect. Actions and feelings may result from the views the mind takes, or the influence of unavoidable constitutional tendencies. When an improper judgment is formed, an improper or incorrect action or feeling may follow. And so long as the mind is subject to err and come to wrong conclusions, so long conduct and emotions resulting may be also improper. To illustrate: I am convinced, beyond a doubt, that my neighbour A. is planning the murder of neighbour B. A great variety of circumstances have combined to work the conviction, until every doubt disappears. Impelled by a conviction of duty, I warn neighbour B. of his danger. Horrified with the crime, I look upon neighbour A. with the feelings I should entertain for a murderer. Nay, I go further, I cause my fears to be known, to the reprobation of him whom I believe to be a guilty wretch. But in the end it is found that I was totally deceived. The

deceptive or misapprehended circumstances led me to most false conclusions. The facts were precisely opposite to my convictions. In place of planning and intending murder, my misjudged neighbour was arranging to compass some great benevolence towards the man I viewed him as plotting to deeply injure. Now, in this case my conduct was improper—my feelings were incorrect—because my judgment was in error. Thus, a thousand illustrations must readily occur to the mind, in which defective judgment will issue in improper conduct and feeling. We do not, therefore, include in our idea of the highest attainable state of spiritual character, freedom from such improprieties of conduct and feeling as result from imperfection of knowledge, or defectiveness of judgment, or unavoidable constitutional frailties. This is precisely Mr. Wesley's doctrine. He says: "But we may carry this thought further yet. A mistake in judgment may possibly occasion a mistake in practice. For instance: Mr. De Renty's mistake, touching the nature of mortification, arising from prejudice of education, occasioned that practical mistake, his wearing an iron girdle. And a thousand such instances there may be, even in those who are in the highest state of grace. Yet where every word and action spring from love, such a mistake is not properly a sin."—*Plain Account*, p. 64.

4. We do not include, in our idea of the highest attainable state, freedom from temptation to sin and suggestions of evil. These, we firmly believe, will follow us to the last, it may be to the expiring gasp. So long as a tempting devil lives, and our senses have contact with a world abounding with evil, and our souls are united with a body whose essence is "of the earth, earthy," whose lusts and passions are "sensual and devilish"—so long as

"we are at home in the body and absent from the Lord," we expect to encounter temptation and evil enticement—it may be the more mighty and desperate, as the progress in holiness advances. Our Saviour "was tempted of the devil forty days." "The disciple is not above his Lord." Adam and Eve were tempted before they fell, and while they were holy. Mr. Wesley always held this view—this is his language: "Neither can we expect till then [till the spirit return to God] to be wholly freed from temptation; for the 'servant is not above his master.' But neither in this sense is there any absolute perfection on earth."—*Plain Account*, p. 21.

5. We do not include in our idea of the highest attainable state, impeccability, or exemption from liability to sin. On the contrary, we believe that one who is entirely sanctified may fall away, so as to lose his state—may sin, and bring guilt and condemnation again upon his soul—is ever liable to this, and consequently under constant need of personal watchfulness, and of Divine assistance.

6. We do not include, in our idea of the highest attainable state, perfection of degree, or attainment beyond which there is no progress—a state in which the soul has gained the highest summit of holiness—the greatest reach of perfection; at which its progress will be stopped, and where it will linger in monotonous equipoise through eternity. On the contrary, we exult in the hope and persuasion of ceaseless progress—of interminable and everlasting advancement—progress while we live, progress after death. As the defects and infirmities of this mortal state are overcome or removed—as the mind expands and unfolds its energies—ever increasing in knowledge—rising to new and more glorious views of God, clear and sublime apprehensions of the

great principles of his Divine government—embracing in its grasp of faith, complete views of the great atonement, and mounting upward to loftier and nobler conceptions of worship—so will the sublimities of its moral perfection wax brighter and brighter, and become still more and more intensely glorious. Thus will it expand through time, and beyond time, throughout eternity. "Beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord," it will be "changed into the same image, from glory to glory." Always loving, but ever increasing in love—ever praising, but ceaselessly ascending into loftier anthems—adoring without interruption, and glowing on with ever brightening fervours, and adoring with intenser admiration. Harmonizing with this statement, Mr. Wesley says: "It [perfection] is improvable. It is so far from lying in an indivisible point, from being incapable of increase, that one perfected in love may grow in grace far swifter than he did before."—*Plain Account*, p. 167.

We have thus stated, as briefly as practicable, some things which we do not include in our idea of Christian perfection, or, as we express it, the highest attainable state of moral character. It may all be summed up in few words: we do not embrace in it the idea of intellectual perfection—perfect knowledge—exemption from ignorance, mistake, error, or from improprieties of conduct and feeling, flowing from ignorance and mistake; nor impeccability; nor a perfection of degree, which excludes increase of attainment; nor freedom from temptation and solicitation to evil. These, in whole or in part, do not enter into our idea.

Having stated what we do not, let us now briefly state what we do, believe.

1. We believe it a Christian's privilege to attain to a state of spirituality, in which he will be *entirely free from sin*,

properly so called, both inward and outward—a state in which he will commit no act involving guilt—in which he will possess no unholy temper, including in the term temper the dispositions of the soul—in which the entire outward man of the life, and the entire inward man of the heart, will be pure in the sight of God. It is not said that evil and vicious suggestions will not be made to a soul in such a state; but it is said, both that there will be no outward compliance with the suggestion, and no inward sympathy for it. There may be the presentation of evil to the mind, but there will be no inward response, no disposition taking sides with it; but either a total deadness to it, or a prompt and united resistance of every power of the soul, as soon as the suggestion is supposed to be evil. This last statement involves one of the most intricate points in this whole discussion; namely, how much impression—suggestions to sin—may be supposed to be produced upon the mind, before it suffers in virtue, before it begins to sin; or where does temptation end and sin begin? To this most difficult question, we answer, sin begins whenever the temptation begins to find inward sympathy, if known to be a solicitation to sin. So long as it is promptly, and with the full and hearty concurrence of the soul, repelled, there is no indication of inward sympathy—there is no sin. An illustration may serve our purpose here. Revenge is sinful. A holy man has been greatly injured by his neighbour, through long years. An opportunity occurs for revenge—he sees how he might now return the injury. The adversary makes this the instrument of temptation. It is suggested to him—it is kept before his mind for many days—it is enforced with a thousand arguments. He endeavours to free himself from the suggestion, but cannot. Now, is the continued presence of the suggestion

evidence of sin? We think not. So long as he resents it with all his power—so long as his soul is dead to it—has no sympathy for it, gives it no favour—does not voluntarily entertain its presence, sin has not commenced, either inward or outward. At the moment it begins to find favour, there is evidence of a loss of inward integrity, and sin has commenced. A Christian, by the blessing of God, may attain to that state when, under every assault of temptation, however long and fierce, he may prevent it from finding any response within; so long as he does this, he is free from sin.

It may be well to explain here, more particularly, both with respect to the dispositions of the soul, and the passions of the body. These are not supposed to be destroyed when a soul is freed from sin, but only brought under right government, and restored to a proper character, not allowed to be instruments of sin. Evil dispositions and propensities are but perverted forms of good ones; and hence, holiness or sanctification consists not in the eradication of them, but in the restoration of them to their legitimate character and use.

The above view is expressed by Mr. Wesley thus: "This perfection implies a deliverance from evil thoughts and evil tempers. First, from evil or sinful thoughts. But here let it be observed, that thoughts concerning evil are not always evil thoughts. A man, for instance, may think of murder, which another has committed, and yet this is no evil or sinful thought. So our blessed Lord himself doubtless thought of or understood the thing spoken by the devil, when he said, 'All this will I give thee if thou wilt fall down and worship me.' Yet had he not evil or sinful thoughts, nor, indeed, was capable of any, because his will was always right with the will of his Father. Indeed, a thousand thoughts,

which are raised in our minds by outward objects or by injections of the devil, are evil in one sense; they are troublesome: but they are not sinful while they have no concurrence of the will, and the heart remains right with God. Sinful thoughts proceed out of sinful hearts; but if the heart be made good, the thoughts will be good also. Christians may be cleansed from sinful tempers which remain in the heart after justification; yea, they may be cleansed from 'all sin, all filthiness of the flesh and spirit,' from all desire or self-will, from all pride, anger, impatience, and the like, so that no root of bitterness or sin, nothing to mar our peace or grieve the Holy Spirit, shall be found in us. Old things shall be done away, and all things become new. We may be sanctified wholly."

2. But, additionally, we include in our idea of this highest state of present Christian privilege, or holiness, more than mere freedom from sin, in the foregoing sense. That was merely a negative view; it has a positive character. We believe it to include, in the second place, besides this, the spiritual graces, as love, meekness, humility, and such like, in perfection—perfection, not of measure, but of kind. By this we do not mean that these holy graces are so complete in measure and growth as to forbid higher development, so that the soul, in this state, can never love more, be more meek, more humble, more believing:—not this: in this direction we believe there will be constant progress, as explained in another place, everlasting improvement, as the capacities continue ever and endlessly to enlarge:—but we do mean that these graces exist in the sanctified soul without alloy, without mixture, *in simplicity*—there is nothing therein contrary to them, and they exist in measure corresponding with the present capacity of the soul possessing them. In

such a soul, when Satan comes to make inquisition for his own, he finds nothing,—when God comes to it, he finds all that it possesses to be in harmony with himself—a throne whereon he reigns without a rival—an empire wherein he exercises undisputed dominion.

This, in our view, is the high and blood-bought privilege of every believer, and it is what we therefore call Christian perfection.

In perfect accordance with these views are the subjoined, from the pen of Mr. Wesley:—

"But whom then do you mean by 'one that is perfect?' We mean one in whom is 'the mind which was in Christ,' and who so 'walketh as Christ also walked;' a man 'that hath clean hands and a pure heart,' or that is 'cleansed from all filthiness of flesh and spirit;' one in whom is 'no occasion of stumbling,' and who, accordingly, 'does not commit sin.' To declare this a little more particularly: we understand by that Scriptural expression, 'a perfect man,' one in whom God hath fulfilled his faithful word, 'From all your filthiness and from all your idols I will cleanse you: I will also save you from all your uncleanness.' We understand hereby one whom God hath 'sanctified throughout, in body, soul, and spirit;' one who 'walketh in the light as He is in the light; in whom is no darkness at all, the blood of Jesus Christ his Son having cleansed him from all sin.'

"This man can now testify to all mankind, 'I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.' He is 'holy as God who called' him 'is holy,' both in heart and 'in all manner of conversation.' He 'loveth the Lord his God with all his heart,' and serveth him 'with all his strength.' He 'loveth his neighbour,' every man, 'as himself;' yea, 'as Christ loveth us;' them, in

particular, that 'despitefully use him and persecute him, because they know not the Son, neither the Father.' Indeed, his soul is all love, filled with 'bowels of mercies, kindness, meekness, gentleness, long-suffering.' And his life agreeth thereto, full of 'the work of faith, the patience of hope, the labour of love.' 'And whatsoever' he 'doeth, either in word or deed,' he 'doeth it all in the name,' in the love and power, 'of the Lord Jesus.' In a word, he doeth 'the will of God on earth, as it is done in heaven.'

"This it is to be a perfect man, to be 'sanctified throughout;' even 'to have a heart so all-flaming with the love of God,' (to use Archbishop Usher's words,) 'as continually to offer up every thought, word, and work, as a spiritual sacrifice, acceptable to God through Christ.' In every thought of our hearts, in every word of our tongues, in every work of our hands, to 'show forth His praise who hath called us out of darkness into his marvellous light.' O that both we, and all who seek the Lord Jesus in sincerity, may thus 'be made perfect in one!'

"Q. When may a person judge himself to have attained this?

"A. When, after having been fully convinced of inbred sin, by a far deeper and clearer conviction than that he experienced before justification, and after having experienced a gradual mortification of it, he experiences a total death to sin, and an entire witness of the renewal; I judge it as impossible this man should be deceived herein as that God should lie. And if one whom I know to be a man of veracity testify these things to me, I ought not, without some sufficient reason, to reject his testimony.

"Q. Is this death to sin, and renewal in love, gradual or instantaneous?

"A. A man may be dying for some time, yet he does not, properly speaking, die, till the instant the soul is separated from the body; and in that instant he lives the life of eternity. In like manner, he may be dying to sin for some time; yet he is not dead to sin, till sin is separated from his soul; and in that instant he lives the full life of love. And as the change undergone when the body dies is of a different kind, and infinitely greater than any we had known before, yea, such as till then it is impossible to conceive; so the change wrought when the soul dies to sin is of a different kind, and infinitely greater than any before, and than any can conceive till he experiences it. Yet he still grows in grace, in the knowledge of Christ, in the witness of the renewal: I judge it as impossible that this man should be deceived as that God should lie."

Summing up the whole he very forcibly adds:—

"1. There is such a thing as perfection; for it is again and again mentioned in Scripture.

"2. It is not so early as justification; for justified persons are to 'go on unto perfection.' Heb. vi, 1.

"3. It is not so late as death; for St. Paul speaks of living men that were perfect. Phil. iii, 15.

"4. It is not absolute. Absolute perfection belongs not to man, nor to angels, but to God alone.

"5. It does not make a man infallible; none is infallible while he remains in the body.

"6. Is it sinless? It is not worth while to contend for a term. It is 'salvation from sin.'

"7. It is 'perfect love.' 1 John iv, 18. This is the essence of it; its properties, or inseparable fruits, are, rejoicing evermore, praying without ceasing, and in everything giving thanks. 1 Thess. v, 16, &c.

"8. It is improvable. It is so far from lying in an indivisible point, from being incapable of increase, that one perfected in love may grow in grace far swifter than he did before.

"9. It is amissible, capable of being lost; of which we have numerous instances. But we were not thoroughly convinced of this till five or six years ago.

"10. It is constantly both preceded and followed by a gradual work.

"11. But is it in itself instantaneous or not? In examining this, let us go on step by step.

"An instantaneous change has been wrought in some believers: none can deny this.

"Since that change, they enjoy perfect love; they feel this, and this alone; they 'rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and in everything give thanks.' Now this is all I mean by perfection; therefore these are witnesses of the perfection which I preach.

"'But in some this change was not instantaneous.' They did not perceive the instant when it was wrought. It is often difficult to perceive the instant when a man dies; yet there is an instant in which life ceases. And if even sin ceases, there must be a last moment of its existence, and a first moment of our deliverance from it.

"'But if they have this love now, they will lose it.' They may; but they need not. And whether they do or no, they have it now; they now experience what we teach. They now are all love; they now rejoice, pray, and praise without ceasing."

In addition to the above extracts, we subjoin one from the pen of Thomas Rutherford, in a letter to a friend in London. It presents the whole subject in a brief but very lucid and satisfactory manner:—

"You ask, 'Do I think there are degrees in sanctification?' I certainly do. And 'what is the lowest degree thereof?' Sanctification begins at justification. In the same moment that we are justified, we are also born again, and therefore sanctified in part. But you mean *entire* sanctification. The lowest degree of this, in the very nature of the thing, is the being cleansed from all inbred sin; from unbelief, pride, anger, peevishness, murmuring, sinful self-love, foolish desires, and undue attachments to persons and things; from all that is contrary to the love of God and our neighbour, to the mind which was also in Christ Jesus: for whatever remains in us contrary to these is properly sin, and, of consequence, so far we are not sanctified. We may be *entirely* sanctified, and yet tempted to sin; for sin and temptation are essentially different. Our Lord was tempted to despair, presumption, and apostasy; that is, the temptation was offered, the bait was laid for him; but he totally rejected it. And he has nowhere promised to exempt us from temptation; but only, that with the temptation he will make a way for our escape, that we may be able to bear it. If, when we are tempted, (let the temptation be what it may,) we steadfastly follow our Lord's example, and, like him, resist and reject it, we do not sin, but conquer through Him that hath loved us. On the other hand, if sin in any degree remain in our heart, we are not *entirely* sanctified; sanctification in this sense being nothing less than the destruction of all indwelling sin.

"Perhaps you will say, 'If this be the lowest degree of *entire* sanctification, what is the highest degree of it?' I answer, Having the same mind which was also in Christ Jesus; being filled with all the fulness of God; living and dying complete in the will of Him who hath called us to his

kingdom and glory. The highest degree of sanctification is prayed for by our Lord in behalf of all that believe on him. John xvii, 20–26. The fruits of it are described by him in his Sermon on the Mount, particularly in Matt. v, 44–48; by St. Paul, 1 Cor. xiii, 4–7; by St. James, iii, 17; by St. Peter, 2 Epist. i, 5–9; and by St. John, 1 Epist. ii, 3–10; iii, 21–24; iv, 16–21. I shall only here insert the words of St. John, which are, 'Hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him. He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked. He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him. Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God. And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight; and this is his commandment, that we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment. And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us. We have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him. Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love. We love him because he first loved us. If a man say, I love God, and

hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from him, that he who loveth God, love his brother also.' He who bears these fruits is a father in Christ.

"St. Paul had attained the very summit of Christian perfection, not only as it respects *receiving*, but also *doing* and *suffering* the will of God, when he testified, 'I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day.' 2 Tim. iv, 6–8. If any ask how he attained to all this, he tells them, Phil. iii, 13, 14, 'This one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.'

"Perhaps some may think I place the mark too high: but I hope it is no higher than the Scriptures place it; and I dare not fix it any lower. But may it not discourage some from seeking after it? It *may*, but it *need* not; there being no *just* cause why it should: for the Lord is as able to bring all his faithful children to the greatest depths and heights of holiness as he was to bring the children of Israel into the promised land. He can as easily remove and cast down whatsoever opposes them as he divided Jordan and overthrew the walls of Jericho. And whoever, like Caleb and Joshua, follow him fully, shall be brought into the wealthy place. They shall be redeemed from all iniquity, and filled with all the fulness of God. All discouragement vanishes when we consider, 1st. This great salvation is all

from the Lord, with whom all things are possible. He speaks, and it is done; he commands, and it stands fast. He says, 'I will—be thou clean;' and immediately the leprosy of sin departs. 'Behold, I make all things new!' and lo! a new creation of light, life, love, holiness, and happiness arises in the heart, 'where only Christ is heard to speak, where Jesus reigns alone.' 2d. That it is all received by faith. The penitent and obedient believer sees the word, the promise, the oath of Him who cannot lie; firmly (as well he may) believes the truth thereof; steadfastly, and in the full confidence of hope, looks to the *promise-making* and *promise-fulfilling* God, being fully persuaded that what he has promised he is both able and willing *now* to perform: and according to his faith it is done unto him. By believing with his whole heart unto righteousness, he sets to his seal that God is true, and God seals him with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, thereby stamping his whole image upon his soul. Thus,

'Faith, mighty faith, the promise sees,
And looks to that alone;
Laughs at impossibilities,
And cries, It shall be done.'

"Meantime we have infinite need to let whatever grace we have received be seen in us more by its own fruits than by our talk concerning it. The blessed Jesus is our pattern. Let us study his holy life day and night, and seek, in all things, a perfect conformity to Him, who, though he was equal with God, was content to be as 'a worm and no man; made himself of no reputation; took upon him the form of a servant; and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.' He is the most perfect Christian who is most like his humble, patient, loving, and obedient

Lord and Saviour. I think some persons among us have been hurt by being set up and extolled for their great attainments in religion. Christ is the 'Lily of the valleys.' He dwells in humble hearts. It is good to lie low, and leave it to the Lord either to exalt or depress us as he shall see best. I do not write thus because I think my friend in particular danger from that quarter: by no means. But humility is a lesson which we have all need to be daily learning; and I write to her just as I think for myself. I am sure you agree with me in believing that the late Mr. Fletcher was the holiest person you ever saw; the person who, above all others, excelled most in every grace: and yet he made no account of himself in anything. He was indeed 'clothed with humility.'"

There is one thing which ought to be taken into the account here, as having a most important practical bearing on the subject; the influence upon character, of both body and mind, an influence quite as discernible in the sanctified state as in other stages of religious experience. Two men equally, and, if you please, entirely holy, may, under certain circumstances, appear with very different advantage, and may generally indeed exhibit quite variant manifestations of character. If judged of without respect to constitutional make and educational influences, and peculiar circumstances and temptations, they may seem most dissimilar, when in truth they are equally holy in the sight of God. It is for this reason mainly that we ought not to judge without palpable indications. One man is of a highly nervous temperament—another is as decidedly imperturbable; one is sanguine—the other distrusting; one is impulsive—another dispassionate: now let all these be brought under the influence of sanctifying grace; it will not change their tempera-

ments all into one—it will not remove the constitutional differences between them, but only control and regulate them. They will be seen, and will impart diversified shade to character, and to different minds will increase or diminish the admiration or otherwise, which character must always awaken. Certain diseases exert a marked influence upon all the powers of the soul—beclouding the understanding, obscuring the judgment, and otherwise affecting the various mental and moral exercises: this influence remains as well after as prior to this high and gracious experience, giving tone and colouring to the whole character. But if the connexion of the soul with the body operates these differences of manifestation, still more do the relations of the intellectual to the moral powers. One man has great wisdom—another is extremely ignorant; one understands all the proprieties of life—another is totally uninformed; one is highly cultivated—the other is without these advantages. They may be, in point of fact, equally holy,—each one has experienced sanctifying grace,—but there will be a great disparity in the outward manifestations: one will appear to much greater advantage than the other; one will fill our idea of perfection, the other will need to be apologized for frequently—not for his sins, but for his ignorance. They may be equally animated with one principle—love; they are equally free from sin; but the outward manifestations differ. This we should keep in mind, both when we judge of others and when we judge of ourselves; it will save us from comparing ourselves among ourselves, and foolishly doing, as is sometimes done, setting up some particular person as a model in all respects for all other persons. One may be buoyant—another calm; one impulsive—another cool; one wise—another ignorant; one attractive—another uninteresting; one

conversable—another dull; one affable—another reserved; one firm—another yielding: all of them may be holy. But whilst holiness does not destroy these differences, let it never be forgotten that it regulates them. They are prevented from becoming sinful.

This suggestion is obviously important. As is said in another chapter, sanctification will be evidenced by its fruits: but it would be extremely preposterous to suppose that, in regard to temperament and manners, it will invariably manifest itself in the same way: this is no part of its office; its office is to remove sin. It is not unfrequently the case that infidels are the most polite and agreeable men in the world: often possessing great natural amiability and fascination of manners; while at heart, and in the privacies of life, they are extremely vile: their exterior gentility is no criterion to their interior principles. They exist mutually independent of each other. The same remark, to a certain extent, is true of Christians, in all the stages of religious experience. Their religion will not fashion them after the elegancies of what we all call graceful and cultivated manners; will not make them accomplished scholars; will not make them business men: it will furnish them with pure hearts, and holy principles, and prevent them from indulging in or even feeling sinful tempers, and from doing wrong in the outward life; not from erring, but from sinning. There is an infinite difference between an error and a sin. It is well to say, in this connexion, that while religion does not secure these non-essential accomplishments of manners, and while it does not produce in all cases precisely the same manifestations of amiability and grace, yet it imparts always, and in its fulness, the essence of all excellence, which is good will,—pure love,—which will constantly show itself, not perhaps in the

rounded and graceful salutation, in the finished exterior, but in the unmistakable exhibition of a good and sincere heart: and further, other things being equal, it will invariably impart, in all respects, real and manifest superiority; the most accomplished and elegant character will be more accomplished by its superadded and crowning glory.

Numerous additional and very instructive quotations might be given from our excellent standards, corroborating the above views,—indeed many references were marked for that purpose,—but our prescribed limits will not allow, and we have deemed it sufficient to show, by a few extracts, that our venerated founder under God, Mr. Wesley, always held and taught them. They are his views throughout; they are the views of Mr. Fletcher, Mr. Watson, Dr. Clarke, Bishop Hedding, and others, who have been at the useful pains of studying the subject most thoroughly.

Having described what we mean by "holiness," we shall now proceed to show that it is a state in advance of mere justification and regeneration.

Regeneration is not entire sanctification: the merely regenerate are not sanctified; they are not entirely freed from sin; they are not perfect in love. Their sins are pardoned; their nature is renewed; they are become children of God; a wonderful and glorious work has been wrought for them and in them, by which they are rescued from the dominion of sin, and become heirs of the promises: but great and glorious as the work is which they have experienced, and exalted and blessed as are the privileges and destiny to which it entitles them, and will assuredly secure to them if retained, yet it is not a complete qualification for heaven—an entire freedom from sin; they are not—how glorious soever their estate, how much to be esteemed and prized,

and no language can magnify its moment—they are not completely holy, entirely sanctified; the old man of sin is not dead, but subjected—not cast out, but bound—not crucified, but brought into captivity.

I need scarcely insist upon this, it is so universally the faith of the Church. The difficulty indeed, is, not, to convince believers that they have not yet attained to such a state of freedom from sin; but, on the other hand, to persuade them that such a state is their privilege. They not only generally insist that they are not yet holy, but more, that they do not expect to be in this life.

Let any Christian closely interrogate his experience and consciousness upon this point; any Christian who has merely attained to pardon and a change of heart; and see whether the immediate response will not be, that, though "pardoned" and "born again," and though living in the daily enjoyment of this grace, and going forward to perfection, still, that there are sinful tendencies and dispositions lurking in his heart; that he is not entirely empty of sin; that he is not a perfectly holy character. Let him enter into a close, faithful, and prayerful analysis of his passions, his affections, his will, his motives, and see if he will not discern remains of the sinful nature within him not entirely dead, but still alive, and seeking the ascendant: as pride, envy, jealousy, anger, impatience, love of the world, dissimulation, self-willedness, and such like. If these do not hold dominion over, if they do not gain indulgence—as they certainly do not—still, do they not have some place and power within him, rising up to give evidence of their presence; though bound, struggling for the mastery, often bringing him into straits, and disturbing his peace and comfort? Is not this so? Reader, is not this your experience? Be candid; is it not your present

consciousness? Look closely; do you not find after all, that, though you are a changed man, "a new creature," still there are these harmful roots of sin remaining within?—not merely outward suggestions, temptations, which are not sins, but likewise inward responses, taking side with the outward solicitation—actual, living, stirring, evils in the heart? What is your answer? I know what it is. I am conscious that such has been my experience, and must believe that it is the common experience of Christians, while in a merely justified state.

But it is asked with earnestness, "Is not the work of God perfect in regeneration?" And we answer, it is a perfect regeneration. But a perfect regeneration is not a perfect sanctification, no more than a perfect penitence is a perfect regeneration. The soul is perfectly born anew, but is not perfectly made holy. But is not a person regenerated a perfect child, and is sanctification anything more than development? We answer: when a soul is regenerated, all the elements of holiness are imparted to it, or the graces are implanted in it, in complete number, and the perfection of these graces is sanctification; and hence, we insist that sanctification does not take place in regeneration, for the graces are not then perfect; additional grace is requisite to perfect them. And again: though in regeneration all the elements of holiness are imparted, all the rudiments of inbred sin are not destroyed; and hence, again, the absence of complete sanctification, which, when it occurs, expels all sin. Regeneration is incipient sanctification in this sense: it is of the same nature as sanctification, and, so far as it extends, is sanctification; it is included in sanctification, but is not so extensive; is not sanctification, because, though it is a degree, it is not the whole of that work.

With this experience the teachings of Scripture fully accord. Take a single passage, found in the Apostle's letter to the Christians at Corinth: "I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal; *as unto babes in Christ.* Ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envyings, and strife, are ye not carnal?" This passage is precisely in point. It exhibits, upon authority of inspiration, the doctrine above expressed. For first, it is certain that the persons here addressed were believers—justified and regenerated Christians. How else could an apostle address them as brethren; much more, how could he expressly declare them to be "*babes in Christ?*" Is it possible to be a "babe in Christ," without justifying and regenerating grace? Surely no one can think so. These persons then were in Christ—they were born again. But what next? Were they entirely holy—free from sin, inward as well as outward? Certainly the Apostle does not say so: on the contrary, he expressly says they were yet "carnal." He could not speak to them as completely spiritual, but as partly carnal; nay, he specifies what of carnality he found remaining among them, and impairing their spirituality or holiness,—"for whereas there is among you envyings, and strife, are ye not carnal?" Are not these the tokens of a sinful nature—"envyings, strife?" Indulged, are they not actual sins?—are not the inward dispositions thereto, inward sins? This passage then fully corroborates our expressed views, and fully authorizes us to say, that evils, opposed to complete spirituality, remain in the hearts of persons in the possession of justifying and regenerating grace.

Let it be remembered, we are now speaking particularly of inbred sin—sins of the heart—or, if any prefer it, evils of the heart. We are aware that the believer does not indulge

in outward sins—sins of the life—that he does not transgress in this sense: "For whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin." But sin committed, and depravity felt, are very different—the one is an action, the other a state of the affections. The merely regenerated believer is saved from the one; and he has grace to enable him to have the victory over the other: but the disposition itself, to some extent, remains, under the control of a stronger, gracious power implanted, but still making resistance, and indicating actual presence, and needing to be entirely sanctified.

Regeneration is sanctification begun, but not completed. The foundation thus being laid, we are to "go on to perfection," to "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ," "till we all come in the unity of the faith unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." "Babes" at first, we are to grow until we become "men and women in the Lord." Upon this point Mr. Wesley is very explicit in his Sermon on "Sin in Believers," and in various other portions of his writings. Speaking, on one occasion, of justification, he says:—

"How naturally do those who experience such a change imagine that all sin is gone; that it is utterly rooted out of their hearts, and has no more place therein. How easily do they draw that inference, 'I feel no sin, therefore I have none; it does not stir, therefore it does not exist; it has no motion, therefore it has no being.' But it is seldom long before they are undeceived, finding sin was only suspended, not destroyed. Temptations return, and sin revives; showing that it was stunned before, not dead. They now feel two principles in themselves, plainly contrary to each other; 'the flesh lusting against the spirit,' nature

resisting the grace of God. They cannot deny, that, although they still feel power to believe in Christ, and love God, and although his Spirit still witnesses with their spirits that they are children of God, yet they feel in themselves sometimes pride, self-will; sometimes anger or unbelief. They find one or more of these frequently striving in their hearts, though not conquering."

There is an excellent chapter on this subject in the judicious and valuable work of Dr. Peck, which, if our limits would allow, we would transcribe for the edification of our readers; but this cannot be done without too greatly extending the limits of this treatise. We refer the reader, anxious for a more elaborate discussion of the point, to this work, (Peck on Christian Perfection,) and also to Mr. Wesley's Sermon on Sin in Believers; where, if they are in any perplexity, they will not fail to find entire relief. With a single additional quotation from that greatest of divines, Richard Watson, we dismiss the subject. He says:—

"That a distinction exists between a regenerate state, and a state of entire and perfect holiness, will be generally allowed. Regeneration, we have seen, is concomitant with justification; but the apostles, in addressing the body of believers, in the churches to whom they wrote their epistles, set before them, both in the prayers they offer in their behalf, and in the exhortations they administer, a still higher degree of deliverance from sin, as well as a higher growth in Christian virtues. Two passages only need to be quoted to prove this: 1 Thess. v, 23, "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body, be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.' 2 Cor. vii, 1,

'Having these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.' In both these passages, deliverance from sin is the subject spoken of: and the prayer, in one instance, and the exhortation, in the other, goes to the extent of entire sanctification of the 'soul' and 'spirit,' as well as of the 'flesh' or 'body' from all sin; by which can only be meant our complete deliverance from all spiritual pollution, all inward depravation of the heart, as well as that which, expressing itself outwardly, by the indulgence of the senses, is called filthiness of the flesh."

We do not believe that more upon this point is necessary. It cannot be requisite with the mass of Christians to enter into elaborate argument to convince them, what they so painfully realize to be true, that, after conversion, inward, unsanctified tempers remain to disturb them. How often, how sadly, have they experienced its truth! How, in secret places, have they wept, and poured out their souls before God on account of it! How have they looked, and longed, and struggled for deliverance! How have they desired, and resolved, and prayed to be holy—to have their inward enemies brought forth and slain, and to have Christ, their adorable Saviour, reign without a rival! Convince them that they are not sanctified! Alas! they need no conviction—they know it well, and many of them feel it deeply, painfully.

To argue with them, would only seem to be a mockery, a taunt, to aggravate their sorrow and shame. Tell me! they would exclaim; tell me not, I am unholy—I know it but too well; but tell me, is there deliverance?—show me where I may find rest. Such, I am persuaded, would be the conscious, the spontaneous view and feeling of all

Christians, who would be at the pains for a few moments to look within, at the heart, and back, at the experience of their pilgrimage. Such, reader, if you have not gone "on to perfection," is your present consciousness; and if you are now rejoicing in sanctifying grace, such is your recollection of the past. How is it? Dropping for a moment all speculation, all theorizing, all thoughts of the subject as a general matter, let us come home, and hold with ourselves a practical, personal conference. Reader, Christian brother, sincere, candid inquirer, how is it? Are you holy? Has the work of entire sanctification by grace been wrought in your heart? Are you now living in the enjoyment of this Divine state? You will not trifle with these questions; I am persuaded you will not: you *cannot:* you claim to be a Christian; you may not treat with even the levity of seeming indifference to yourself, a subject of such sacred moment. Are you a *minister?* are you a *layman?* are you *conspicuous?* are you *obscure?* Whoever you are, ponder, as in the immediate presence of God, this question, *Are you holy?* Realize that God, the great, the adorable, is now present, *by your side,* looking upon you, waiting your answer! Brethren, how momentous the question! We are hurrying on to the judgment—passing like an arrow through the air. A step, and the grave will contain us. An instant, and we shall stand before the throne: before the throne of Him who has commanded us to be holy; before the throne of Him who died for our sanctification; before the throne of Him who is ready, waiting, willing, and able to sanctify us! Before the throne we shall soon stand. Are we ready? Is our work done?

"Without holiness no man shall see the Lord." Fearful declaration! "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do

with thy might; for there is no work, nor knowledge, nor device, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest." Instructive exhortation! What needs to be done, must be done now; or it may not be done forever;—to-day, ere that deep sleep, of the long unwaking night of the grave! O that we may "have such a heart in us" as to consider these things!

With the apostle's prayer, as most expressive of our feeling, we close the present chapter. "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend, with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God. Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the Church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen."

## CHAPTER III.

### HOLINESS ATTAINABLE.

Is the high state of moral and spiritual excellence described in the preceding chapter attainable in this life? This is the question we are now about to discuss.

Many a spacious and beautiful theory has perished for want of proof. The most magnificent structure may be valueless because of the insecurity of its foundation. Not all that is beautiful is true.

In this chapter it is our intention to present the proof upon which we rely for the support of the foregoing views. And whence shall the proof be derived? "To whom shall we go?" Not to creeds, or decretals, or ecclesiastical canons, or councils! To the Bible!—what saith the Lord? All will admit the propriety of this appeal. We do not discard or disparage the opinions of the wise and good; but, however much we may esteem them, they are of no authority in matters of religious faith. We may thankfully employ them as helps, but dare not rest in them as infallible guides. We adhere to that sentiment of the illustrious Stillingfleet, I believe it was,—a sentiment worthy to be written upon the sky, and read by all generations,—"The Bible—the Bible alone, is the religion of Protestants." Employing all lesser lights as aids, and rejoicing in them, we look away, and beyond them, for fuller illumination, and sufficient instruction, to Him who is the light of the world and the teacher of his people. Let us, therefore, immediately address ourselves to

the study of the holy oracles, and find what they teach upon the subject.

There are several methods for ascertaining the teaching of the Bible; but these may be generally classified into the direct and inferential. The *direct* is that in which a truth is plainly and unequivocally asserted; the inferential is that in which truth is implied in, or may be inferred from, something explicitly stated, or deduced as a logical consequence from either words or doctrines clearly laid down in the Bible.

The direct may generally be assumed to be the safer and more authoritative method; but under certain restrictions, and within some limits, the inferential may be of undoubted reliability: indeed, an inference, or a logical deduction, sometimes is equivalent to the strongest and most emphatic declaration, in clearness, certainty, and sanction.

Applying the direct method, one single inspired declaration is competent to establish any truth. Nothing more than this is necessary. Repeated and varied statements of the same thing may heighten the certainty that the exact idea is apprehended; but one "thus saith the Lord," is eternally sufficient to settle the most difficult proposition.

One clear inference is sufficient to create conviction of truth; not perhaps competent to remove all doubt, unless the inference be, as is the case in some instances, tantamount with the most emphatic assertion—then it carries with it all the force of a "thus saith the Lord."

In this treatise we shall employ both these methods for eliciting the Divine teaching; and we hope to sustain our position, not by a single and isolated declaration only, or a single inference only, but by a great number of both direct and inferential proofs, of the most unequivocal and irre-

sistible authority:—declarations so various, contained in commands, promises, prayers, exhortations, statements, and narratives; and inferences so diversified, arising from so many sources, as to convince every candid reader that the doctrine we contend for is not limited to a bare and questionable place, a doubtful and uncertain existence in the holy records, but is repletely and abundantly, explicitly and with great clearness, embodied as a cardinal feature throughout the whole system. It breathes in the prophecy—thunders in the law—murmurs in the narrative—whispers in the promises—supplicates in the prayers—sparkles in the poetry—resounds in the songs—speaks in the types—glows in the imagery—voices in the language—and burns in the spirit, of the whole scheme, from its alpha to omega, from its beginning to its end. Holiness! Holiness needed! Holiness required! Holiness offered! Holiness attainable! Holiness a present duty—a present privilege—a present enjoyment, is the progress and completeness of its wondrous theme! It is the truth glowing all over—webbing all through revelation; the glorious truth which sparkles, and whispers, and sings, and shouts, in all its history, and biography, and poetry, and prophecy, and precept, and promise, and prayer; the great central truth of the system. The wonder is, that all do not see, that any rise up to question, a truth so conspicuous, so glorious, so full of comfort.

1. It is directly taught in the Scriptures.

For the convenience of our readers, we will cite, in connexion, a large number of passages in which the doctrine is taught. After presenting a partial exhibit of the volume of evidence, we will classify and arrange it for the fuller realization of its force and sufficiency. At present, we will

simply array quotations bearing directly upon the point; and what we have here collected, has only been the labour of a few hours, and a very incomplete research.

*Passages in which it is taught by command.*—"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength, and thy neighbour as thyself." Luke x, 27. "Be ye holy; for I am holy." 1 Pet. i, 16. "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." Heb. xii, 14. "Be ye perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." Matt. v, 48. "Hear, O Israel: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy soul, and with all thy might." Deut. vi, 5. "Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people; but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I am the Lord. Ye shall keep my statutes." Lev. xix, 18. "And now, Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in his ways, and to love him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, to keep the commandments of the Lord thy God, and his statutes, which I command thee this day, for thy good? Circumcise, therefore, the foreskin of your heart, and be no more stiff-necked." Deut. x, 12, 13, 16. "Serve God with a perfect heart and willing mind; for the Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth the imagination of the thoughts." 1 Chron. xxviii, 9. "This is my commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you." John xv, 12. "Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and faith unfeigned." 1 Tim. i, 5. "Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall

be with you." 2 Cor. xiii, 11. "I give thee charge in the sight of God, . . . that thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Tim. vi, 13, 14. "Sanctify yourselves, therefore, and be ye holy. . . . And ye shall keep my statutes, and do them: I am the Lord which sanctify you." Lev. xx, 7, 8. "I am the Almighty God: walk before me, and be thou perfect." Gen. xvii, 1. "But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy." 1 Pet. i, 15, 16.

*Passages in which it is taught in exhortation.*—"Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." 2 Cor. vii, 1. "Therefore, leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection." Heb. vi, 1. "Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded." Phil. iii, 15.

*Passages in which it is taught in promise.*—"Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you." Ezek. xxxvi, 25. "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." Matt. v, 6. "In those days, and in that time, saith the Lord, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found." Jer. l, 20. "And the Lord thy God will circumcise thy heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live." Deut. xxx, 6. "Come, now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though

they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." Isa. i, 18. "I will give them a heart to know me, that I am the Lord; and they shall be my people, and I will be their God: for they shall return unto me with their whole heart. After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people." Jer. xxiv, 7; xxxi, 33. "I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them." Ezek. xxxvi, 27. "No good thing will the Lord withhold from them that walk uprightly." Psa. lxxxiv, 11. "I will also save you from all your uncleanness." Ezek. xxxvi, 29. "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God." Matt. v, 8. "I will turn my hand upon thee, and purely purge away thy dross, and take away all thy tin." Isa. i, 25.

*Passages in which it is taught in declarations.*—"Jesus Christ is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." 1 Cor. i, 30. "Unto us are given exceeding great and precious promises; that by these ye might be partakers of the Divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." 2 Pet. i, 4. "If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." 1 John i, 7, 9. "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear." 1 John iv, 18. "Whoso hath this hope in him, purifieth himself, even as he is pure." 1 John iii, 3. "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteous-

ness; by whose stripes ye were healed." 1 Pet. ii, 24. "Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus." Col. i, 28. "And he shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities." Psa. cxxx, 8. "But whoso keepeth his word, in him is the love of God perfected." 1 John ii, 5. "Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord." Psa. cxix, 1. "And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." Eph. iv, 24. "Our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." Rom. vi, 6. "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." 1 John ii, 1; iii, 8. "If, therefore, thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light." Matt. vi, 22. "Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate." Heb. xiii, 12. "And this also we wish, even your perfection." 2 Cor. xiii, 9. "To the end that he may establish your hearts unblamable in holiness before God." 1 Thess. iii, 13. "For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness." 1 Thess. iv, 7. "This is the will of God, even your sanctification." 1 Thess. iv, 3. "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath raised up a horn of salvation for us, as he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, that we, being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life." Luke i, 68–75. "God hath chosen you to salvation, through

sanctification, and belief of the truth." 2 Thess. ii, 13. "And he gave some, apostles; and some. prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come. in unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ; from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body, unto the edifying of itself in love." Eph. iv, 11–16. "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh; that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Rom. viii, 3, 4. "And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him that died for them, and rose again." 2 Cor. v, 15.

*Passages in which it is taught in prayer.*—"For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be

able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God. Now, unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the Church by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end. Amen." Eph. iii, 14–21. "Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ, saluteth you, always labouring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God." Col. iv, 12. "Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ." Heb. xiii, 20, 21. "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly: and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body, be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Thess. v, 23. "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me." Psa. li, 10. "That they all may be one; as, thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us... I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me." John xvii, 21, 23. "Sanctify them through thy truth." John xvii, 17. "Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth, as it is done in heaven; deliver us from evil." Matt. vi, 10, 13.

*Passages in which it is taught as having been experienced.* "And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified." 1 Cor. vi, 11. "Mark the perfect man,

and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace." Psa. xxxvii, 37. "Behold, God will not cast away a perfect man." Job viii, 20. "And Herod feared John, knowing that he was a just man, and a holy." Mark vi, 20. "But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life." Rom. vi, 22. "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh; that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Rom. viii, 2–4. "They were both [Zacharias and Elisabeth] righteous before God, walking in all the commandments of the Lord blameless." Luke i, 6. "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless, I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God." Gal. ii, 20. "Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily, and justly, and unblamably, we behaved ourselves among you that believe." 1 Thess. ii, 10. "Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world." 1 John iv, 17. "And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God." Rev. xiv, 5. "Then said I, woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips: .... for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts. Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar: and he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away,

and thy sin purged." Isa. vi, 5–7. "Our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." Rom. vi, 6. "Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded." Phil. iii, 15.

Let the reader ponder these Scriptures. What an irresistible volume of instruction and evidence they contain! How full, how various, and how explicit! Is it possible for any one to give them even a cursory reading, and not feel that he is called unto holiness? Much more, *can any one*, seriously, and with devout and prayerful study before God, endeavour to comprehend and feel their import, and not realize that it is his privilege, his *duty*, to be a holy man? Surely we misjudge, or the thing is impossible. Suppose any one should appropriate these lucid and sublime Scripture expressions to himself, and profess to have attained the experience they adumbrate, would not all men understand him to make profession of holiness? Could he employ more explicit terms to declare the enjoyment of such a state, than those contained in the passages quoted? Were his object fulness, intensiveness of expression, where would he go for a phrase stronger than this, "Sanctify you wholly?" or this, "The blood of Jesus Chirst his Son cleanseth from all sin?" or this, "That ye might be filled with all the fulness of God?" or this, "Perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect?" Were there but a single passage intimating this glorious truth, there might be room for hesitancy; or a doctrine so wonderful, so replete with surprises,—though repeated at distant intervals,—might startle our incredulity: but when it comes in such resistless volume, and stands out with such commanding distinctness, upon what principle can we justify suspicion, or even delay in its reception?

But the argument which seems so convincing upon a bare recitation of the word of the Lord, becomes incalculably stronger—amounts to irresistible demonstration, when these Scriptures are classified, and their full force and meaning elicited. If the first and only impression from the simple reading of the word is, that holiness is needed, is required, is attainable—and surely it is so—an analysis of these rendered passages must ripen that impression into an undoubting certainty—a resistless conviction—a felt and conscious assurance.

1. That holiness is attainable we contend, first, because God commands it: "Be ye holy, for I the Lord your God am holy." "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." "Be ye perfect, even as your Father who is in heaven is perfect." "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength." Now in these passages, and many others quoted in the foregoing pages, and many others still not quoted, entire holiness is commanded. Is it not so? Surely no one will presume to dispute this! But what then? If holiness is commanded, either it is practicable to comply with the command, or it is not. If it is practicable, then it may be attained; and what we contend for is true. If it is not practicable, then God has issued a command which it is impossible should be obeyed—made a requirement of his creatures which they have no power to perform: but this is the quintessence of tyranny—the grossest conceivable injustice! Who is prepared for this latter conclusion? Who shall come forth to contend that God is unjust? Whosoever denies that holiness is attainable, and yet admits that it is commanded! It would be no hazard to rest the whole con-

troversy on this point: without progressing a step further, the opposer of attainable holiness would find himself inextricably and hopelessly entangled.

2. That holiness is attainable, we contend, because it is promised upon practicable conditions: "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols will I cleanse you." "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be white as wool." "I will also save you from all uncleanness." "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

In these passages, holiness, as cleansing from all sin, as being filled with all righteousness, is explicitly promised to God's people, upon certain conditions. That this is so, is too plain to be doubted; too obvious to require elucidation. But what then? Either those who comply with the conditions will realize holiness in the fulfilment of the promises, or God's promise will fail. If the former, our doctrine is true; if the latter, God is false. I write it with reverence and trembling, and in vindication of his eternal truthfulness. Who shall charge the adorable Jehovah with falsehood? Who shall turn his truth into a lie? Not one. What he hath said shall stand fast forever. Though the heavens be rent asunder, and the earth be removed, not "one jot or tittle of his word shall fail" to all generations. But is it said, Yea, truly, if any one would comply with the conditions, the promise would be fulfilled—God would be true; but no one can comply with

them, and therefore it is, that holiness is not attainable in this life? Such a supposition is even more dishonourable to God than open falsehood. If the condition is impracticable,—cannot be complied with,—the intimation of it is mockery, deception, and fraud, hypocrisy added to falsehood, and fraud superadded to both. God can neither prove unfaithful nor mock his creatures with impracticable conditions: therefore, as he has promised holiness upon certain conditions, holiness is attainable. Let the earnest, honest seeker after holiness, remember who hath promised —a God who cannot lie—and banish all his doubts, dismiss his fears, and claim the offered boon.

3. We contend for the attainableness of holiness, because it is prayed for, in behalf of the Church, by inspired men, yea, and by our Saviour himself; and because it is inculcated in that form of prayer which our Saviour gave to his people, as well as by the apostles in the following and similar passages: "Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work, to do his will; working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight." "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly: and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body, be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." "Sanctify them through thy truth." In these passages, and many others cited above, holiness is distinctly, specifically prayed for by inspired men, and by Him who needed no inspiration to guide him into all truth. What are we to infer therefore? They believed holiness to be attainable, or they did not. If they did not believe it attainable, then they were guilty of the grossest duplicity and mockery—our Lord among

them—when they prayed for it. For what greater mockery can be conceived of, than that of solemnly praying for what we know cannot be realized? Would not this be the very climax of insane and hypocritical presumption? And could such prayers be offered under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit? If not, the inspiration of so much of the Scriptures is renounced. But did they believe their prayers might be answered, and holiness bestowed? Then it was so, or they were mistaken; if mistaken, and yet inspired, they were deluded by the Holy Ghost, and inspiration is not to be trusted. What fearful havoc the denial of this doctrine thus makes with the word of God, and the character and consistency of those holy men, headed by our Lord and Master, who taught it! Whatever infidels may do, thus to dishonour the word of God and the memory of his best friends, Christians will at least hesitate before they adopt a scheme so fraught with ruin.

4. We contend for the doctrine, because it is inculcated in Scripture exhortations: "Leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on to perfection." "Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh, perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord." Christians are here, under sanction of inspiration, exhorted to the attainment of holiness. Now the thing is practicable, or it is not. If not, then we are divinely exhorted to do an impracticable thing; as great an absurdity as to suppose ourselves exhorted to pluck the sun from its orbit. Can such folly and trifling be charged upon God? Who shall venture so great an insult upon him who is infinitely sincere and eternally serious? If so,—if the thing is practicable,—then holiness is attainable, and our doctrine is true.

5. The attainableness of holiness is argued from the declarations of the Scriptures: "Jesus Christ is made unto us wisdom, and sanctification, and redemption." "This is the will of God, even your sanctification." "Our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed." "For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness." In these passages, holiness is declared to be the privilege and calling of Christians—a state which it is the will of God they should enjoy. The doctrine of its practicability is as undoubtedly taught as any other doctrine in the Bible. Now these declarations are true, or they are false. If true, which every Christian at least is bound to believe, then holiness is attainable; and so our doctrine stands upon the same ground as the truth of revelation. If these declarations are false, the whole scheme is a fabrication, and we are all most sadly, most deeply deceived. No one is prepared to embrace this alternative; and rejecting it, the truthfulness of all that we contend for must be admitted.

6. The attainability of holiness is contended for, because it is declared to have been attained: "And such were some of you: but ye are washed; but ye are sanctified." "Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily, and justly, and unblamably we behaved ourselves among you that believe." "Herein is our love made perfect, . . . because as he is, so are we in this world." "Let us, therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded." In these passages, and a vast number more, holiness is spoken of as the experience of certain persons. It was their experience, or it was not. If it was not their experience, the declarations are false, and the Scriptures are unworthy of confidence. If it was their experience, holiness is attainable in this life. Who

can hesitate between these alternatives? Or shall it be pretended that, though holiness has been the privilege of a few favoured individuals, yet it is not possible to all. It is not presumable any will assume this ground. But should any be so inclined, to his own discouragement, or the discouragement of others, let him answer well this question, Who hath made the discrimination, and where may it be found?

7. The doctrine we contend for is further argued from the fact that ample provision is made for it: "Wherefore Jesus, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate." "For this cause the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come, in unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." Here the attainment of holiness is declared to be an object, to secure the realization of which certain provisions are made. If the means provided are competent,—and who shall say that God has instituted incompetent means?—then the object they provide for may be realized. If the death of Christ is not a failure, the works of the devil may be destroyed. If his suffering without the gate does not come short in its ability of his intent, the people may be sanctified. To suppose holiness not attainable, is to cast contempt on the provisions of grace, and, above all, to dishonour his own meritorious and all-efficacious sacrifice.

Thus does it appear, in a great variety of ways, that

holiness is taught as an attainable blessing in the Holy Scriptures. Our limits will not allow, or other direct arguments, no less conclusive than the above, might be added. But let the reader ponder these well, and examine them with a candour becoming the subject, and see if he is not shut up to this conclusion, whatever may have been his prejudices, whatever its difficulties.

There are a few additional considerations important in these connexions, constituting inferential arguments or proofs; and these, it is believed, are sufficient, without the volume of Divine evidence set forth above, to produce conviction in every candid mind. The consequences of rejecting the doctrine for which we contend are alone sufficient in our estimation to cause its acceptance. We subjoin a few inferential proofs.

God is infinitely holy—so proclaimed, and so admitted to be. By consequence, all sin is utterly, and without restriction, offensive to him,—"the abominable thing which his soul hateth." He, therefore, must prefer its entire destruction. Can any one doubt this? Is it not the irresistible conviction of every Christian mind, particularly, that the perfectly holy nature of God is so at variance with sin that he would delight in its entire removal? Surely it is so. But what then? Why manifestly this: if sin is so offensive to God, that its entire removal would please him, then it may be so removed, unless it can be shown that it is a thing absolutely impossible in itself, or inconsistent with his plan of government. That the thing is impossible to infinite wisdom and infinite power, no one will assume. That it is inconsistent with his plan of government, to bring sin to an end, is scarcely to be inferred, particularly since he has declared that his Son was given

to destroy the works of the devil. But if God, from his holiness, hates sin; and from his goodness, is inclined to rescue his people from its evils; and by his wisdom, understands how it may be accomplished; and by his power, is able to achieve it; and if the thing is not in itself impossible, nor inconsistent with his government, then certainly it may be done. Should it be intimated that this argument proves too much, and we should be retorted upon in the following manner: Why, then, is not all sin destroyed, all men freed? The answer is plain: It is because men will not; and even though God's nature is wholly averse to sin, he will not, for its destruction, interfere with the freedom of his creatures. This would be inconsistent with his plan of moral government. Our supposition is quite another. Here are men who will to be freed from sin, who earnestly pray to be delivered, who would comply with any possible terms. The argument is, Does not the nature of God infer that he might interfere for their rescue? What shall prevent? Let the objector intimate a reason why God will leave his creature thus struggling and longing to be free, under the cruel pollutions which he himself abhors and abominates, and that they might be saved from which he did not count it too great a sacrifice to give his only-begotten Son to die. His nature infers his willingness, his ability; why, then, are we asked to infer that it may not take place? Shall we have an answer?

2. Again: if holiness is not attainable in this life, then it cannot be required; or if it is not attainable, and yet is required, then an impossibility is required. If the last consequence is assumed, then it follows that God is guilty of the grossest injustice; for he requires an impossibility. No Christian mind certainly can embrace this alternative

for a moment. But, then, take the remaining alternative. Such a state is not required. What follows? Manifestly this: if entire freedom from all sin is not required, then some sin may be felt or indulged properly, innocently, without guilt; for it is contrary to no requirement—the transgression of no law, and cannot, therefore, involve guilt or crime. But, further, admit that God does not require men to be free from all sin, then this follows,—entire freedom from sin is not best, (it is better to have some sin remain;) or, if entire freedom from sin is best, better than that some sin should remain, and yet God does not require it, then the unavoidable consequence is, God does not require what is best. Neither one of these postulates can be admitted—no one will contend for either: but their admitted absurdity is fatal to the premises.

3. A further consequence of the assumption is: if freedom from sin cannot be attained in this life, it should not be sought or prayed for. To pray for what it is impossible in the conviction of the mind should be realized, is mockery—the sheerest hypocrisy. No absurdity can be conceived of greater than that of seeking what it is certain, and known so to be, cannot be found. The consequence, therefore, of the belief that entire freedom from sin cannot be attained, must be to discourage all efforts in that direction, as useless and vain; nay, to render the idea of such efforts ridiculous and absurd, and so to reconcile the mind to a sinful state.

Is the reader convinced that God requires men to be free from sin? Is he also convinced that God requires no impossibility? Then he must allow that the required state is possible. Does he believe a state of freedom from sin ought to be aspired to—sought after? Then he must

believe that it may be gained if sought. This, it must be, is palpable to every mind. The intelligent reader can for himself pursue this train of reflection, and see what grossly unscriptural consequences result at every point from the rejection of the plain, simple truth. And why, in the face of such evidence, and at the hazard of such consequences, shall it be rejected?

The doctrine usually opposed to this is, that holiness cannot take place until death—then, it is admitted, it must be given as a qualification for heaven. We cannot do better service to our readers here than to quote from that great and good divine, Mr. Watson:—

"To the opinion in question," he says, "there appear to be the following fatal objections:—

"1. That we nowhere find the promise of entire sanctification restricted to the article of death, either expressly, or in fair inferences, from any passage of Holy Scripture.

"2. That we nowhere find the circumstance of the soul's union with the body represented as a necessary obstacle to its entire sanctification.

"3. The doctrine before us is disproved by those passages of Scripture which connect our entire sanctification with subsequent habits and acts, to be exhibited in the conduct of believers *before death*. So in the quotation from Rom. vi, just given,—'Knowing this, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.' So the exhortation in 2 Cor. vii, 1. And in 1 Thess. v, 23, the apostle's prayer for the entire sanctification of the Thessalonians, and then for their preservation in that hallowed state, 'unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.'

"4. It is disproved also by those passages which require us

to bring forth the graces and virtues which are usually called the fruits of the Spirit. That these are to be produced during our life, and to be displayed in our spirit and conduct, cannot be doubted; and we may then ask, whether they are required of us in perfection and maturity? If so, in this degree of perfection and maturity, they necessarily suppose the entire sanctification of the soul from the opposite and antagonist evils.

"5. The doctrine of the necessary indwelling of sin in the soul until death, involves other unscriptural consequences. It supposes that the seat of sin is in the flesh, and thus harmonizes with the pagan philosophy, which attributed all evil to matter. The doctrine of the Bible, on the contrary, is, that the seat of sin is in the soul; and it makes it one of the proofs of the fall and corruption of our spiritual nature, that we are in bondage to the appetites and motions of the flesh. Nor does the theory which places the necessity of sinning in the connexion of the soul with the body, account for the whole moral case of man. There are sins, as pride, covetousness, malice, and others, which are wholly spiritual; and yet no exception is made in this doctrine of the necessary continuance of sin until death, as to them. There is surely no need to wait for the separation of the soul from the body, in order to be saved from evils which are the sole offspring of the spirit; and yet these are made as inevitable as the sins which more immediately connect themselves with the excitement of the animal nature.

"We conclude, therefore, as to the time of our complete sanctification, or, to use the phrase of the apostle Paul, 'the destruction of the body of sin,' that it can neither be referred to the hour of death, nor placed subsequently to this present life. The attainment of perfect freedom from sin

is one to which believers are called during the present life, and is necessary to that completeness of 'holiness,' and of those active and passive graces of Christianity, by which they are called to glorify God in this world, and to edify mankind."

Mr. Wesley, with that sharpness of logic and terseness of style which he alone could command, thus, at a stroke, digs up this whole error by the roots, and casts it forth mercilessly to perish.

"Does the soul's going out of the body effect its purification from indwelling sin? If so, is it not something else, not the blood of Christ, which cleanseth it from all sin? If his blood cleanseth us from all sin while the soul and body are united, is it not in this life? If when that union ceases, is it not in the next? And is not this too late? If in the article of death, what situation is the soul in when it is neither in the body nor out of it? Let any one ponder this short chain of invincible reasoning, and he must soon perceive, that to make a death purgatory necessary to cleansing from sin, is to take the honour from the blood of Christ; and further, that cleansing must take place in the body or out of it; if out of the body, then in the next world and not in this; if in the body, then before death and while the soul is united with the body; and if in this life, and in the union of soul and body at all, why not a day before death, and if a day, why not a year?"

The theory of a death purgatory, which is thus summarily cut up by those able and holy men, is obviously unworthy of confidence; 1. Because it has no place in the word of God —not taught in a solitary passage; 2. It is contrary to express revelation; 3. It involves consequences the most unscriptural and absurd.

With these statements of proof we rest the case; persuaded that no candid mind will long falter in arriving at a conclusion. Let him sincerely and prayerfully consider and lay it to heart, and see if he is not called to holiness; see if there is any sufficient excuse for his remaining in sin! Before God, with your hand upon your heart, and looking to the judgment, how is it, reader? It may be you are ready to reply, the argument seems conclusive, but there are difficulties in the way. In the next chapter we shall examine objections.

To the above we subjoin the following forcible extract from Mr. Wesley:—

"Queries, humbly proposed to those who deny perfection to be attainable in this life.

"1. Has there not been a larger measure of the Holy Spirit given under the gospel than under the Jewish dispensation? If not, in what sense was the Spirit not given before Christ was glorified? John vii, 39.

"2. Was that 'glory which followed the sufferings of Christ,' (1 Pet. i, 11,) an external glory, or an internal, namely, the glory of holiness?

"3. Has God anywhere in Scripture commanded us more than he has promised to us?

"4. Are the promises of God respecting holiness to be fulfilled in this life, or only in the next?

"5. Is a Christian under any other laws than those which God promises to 'write in our hearts?' Jer. xxxi, 31, &c.; Heb. viii, 10.

"6. In what sense is 'the righteousness of the law fulfilled in those who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit?' Rom. viii, 4.

"7. Is it impossible for any one in this life to 'love God

with all his heart, and mind, and soul, and strength?' And is the Christian under any law which is not fulfilled in this love?

"8. Does the soul's going out of the body effect its purification from indwelling sin?

"9. If so, is it not something else, not 'the blood of Christ, which cleanseth' it 'from all sin?'

"10. If his blood cleanseth us from all sin, while the soul and body are united, is it not in this life?

"11. If when that union ceases, is it not in the next? And is not this too late?

"12. If in the article of death, what situation is the soul in when it is neither in the body nor out of it?

"13. Has Christ anywhere taught us to pray for what he never designs to give?

"14. Has he not taught us to pray, 'Thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven?' And is it not done perfectly in heaven?

"15. If so, has he not taught us to pray for perfection on earth? Does he not then design to give it?

"16. Did not St. Paul pray according to the will of God when he prayed that the Thessalonians might be 'sanctified wholly, and preserved' (in this world, not the next, unless he was praying for the dead) 'blameless in body, soul, and spirit, unto the coming of Jesus Christ?'

"17. Do you sincerely desire to be freed from indwelling sin in this life?

"18. If you do, did not God give you that desire?

"19. If so, did he not give it you to mock you, since it is impossible it should ever be fulfilled?

"20. If you have not sincerity enough even to desire it, are you not disputing about matters too high for you?

"21. Do you ever pray God to 'cleanse the thoughts of your heart, that' you 'may perfectly love him?'

"22. If you neither desire what you ask, nor believe it attainable, pray you not as a fool prayeth?

"God help thee to consider these questions calmly and impartially!"

In the foregoing arguments we have said nothing about particular terms. We have entered into no learned criticisms of the words in the original, rendered in our version "perfection, sanctification, holiness," and their cognates. This, for two reasons: mainly, first, *such learning* would not be of signal use to most of our readers—would not, in all probability, increase either the clearness or power of our argument; but particularly because in this work we have depended more on definitions than terms. Our doctrines have been set forth in statements rather than couched in technicalities. Any one who reads our explanations, given at length in the second chapter, will not fail to see, both our precise views and how they are sustained by the arguments contained in this chapter. More minute and detailed investigations reaching out to other subjects we have purposely avoided.

In dismissing this branch of our work, we would urge our readers to a candid and faithful application of what has been said above; and should you, under misleading influence, still hesitate and question as to the extent of your privilege—as to the magnitude of your high calling of God in Christ Jesus—as to your imperative duty—then let me ask you to consider well, why this doubt. What hinders your entire sanctification? Do not hasten from this question. Linger, and leave it not until you find the answer! Is it because your heart is corrupt and vile—*radically* imper-

fect? But has God no power? Cannot he "change your old rebellious heart, and form your soul anew?" Is there not efficacy in the blood of Jesus to make you, *not partially*, but thoroughly clean? Is not the Holy Ghost a sanctifier? Are the means of salvation inadequate to this result? Is it so? You are in the world. I know this; but is there a necessity that you remain sinners in the world? Do not, I beg of you, avoid this question. Away with vain excuses; before God, in all holy, Christian sincerity, come directly to the point! Has not God provided for your possible present sanctification? If you will live in its neglect—if you will divide your heart between God and the world—if you will not make the necessary sacrifices, and exercise the requisite devotion—if you will not come up to your gracious, glorious privilege—if you prefer or even submit to linger where you are, yet do not deny, as your apology, the sufficiency of the grace of God. Take the shame to yourself, where it belongs—do not impute it to your dishonoured Master. But why not go forward? Why this disposition to take sides with your enemies—to strengthen the hands of your destroyers? O brethren—lovers of our Lord Jesus Christ—let us arise. Come, our Saviour bids us "Arise and shine." Why will we longer hesitate? Why not now resolve? May our God, whose name is holy, bring us into the heritage of his people, and "sanctify us throughout soul, body, and spirit, for his name's sake!"

## CHAPTER IV.

### OBJECTIONS CONSIDERED.

To the doctrine taught in the foregoing chapters, it is admitted there are some seeming objections; and to what truth is there not? Nor would we account them insignificant. They are not. They are apparently weighty and serious; and however clear and conclusive we may think the reasonings upon which the doctrine is based, it is by no means complete until these objections are candidly and completely answered. The work is but half done, when what we conceive to be a clear chain of Scriptural and argumentative proof is presented to the reader. Opposite proofs are presented by antagonists, equally respectable for numbers, talents, and piety with ourselves, to disprove our views. It is due them, it is due ourselves, it is due our readers, that we give full attention to such objections. If they are real, there must be some defect in our views; and no dogmatism, no assurance, no attenuated chain of reasoning, will meet the case, if there are grave objections unanswered. Errorists declaim much about evidence—make great show of proof—adduce long lists of arguments—flourish trumpets of reasoning; but they avoid the rencounter with objections; they find no heart for this. The reason is apparent; much that is plausible may be said in favour of any proposition, but a real objection is difficult to answer, and, unanswered, must create doubt, if it does not prove fatal. One valid objection is fatal to a million proofs. Truth has no real objections, error has many. Nor would we, in meeting objections, present them in a weak and impaired aspect. Let us contem-

plate them in all their strength—in their utmost force. This, because it is our interest to know the truth and nothing less, nothing else. We have no interest to dissemble in favour of any theory, however cherished. It is truth alone that we are concerned to know.

What, then, are the difficulties encompassing the doctrine for which we contend? Why should we give it a questioning reception, and not at once, with warm cordiality, welcome it into the chamber of our confidence? There are a number of seeming reasons—I say seeming, because I hope to show, however plausible, they are not real. They are of sufficient importance to cause us closely to examine our ground, but not sufficiently invincible, as I hope, to cause us to abandon it, or leave our opposers with excuse.

1. The first objection offered is this: The doctrine cannot be true, because many Christians do not receive it; whole denominations of Christians do not receive it; the most learned and excellent divines in great numbers do not receive it; it is not now, and it has not been the belief of the majority of the Church. Many, who with undoubted ability and sincerity have studied the Scriptures for a whole lifetime, have never found this doctrine therein taught; but an opposite and antagonistic doctrine! How is this to be explained? Were these men, the majority, in error? Were they not equal in ability, to arrive at the truth, with their opposers? Were they not as candid and sincere? Why then must we believe they were in error?

This is no trifling objection. He would be rashly indiscreet, foolishly self-assured, who could turn away from it without consideration.

But what then have we to weigh against this objection to break its force? An array of other great names, an

equal amount of learning, and respectability, and candour, and application? No. This might balance, but would not settle the difficulty. We meet it with the word of the Lord! One, "Thus saith the Lord," is more powerful than all the opinions of all the men the world ever contained. The objection is apparently strong, but really feeble. Feeble, because it carries the doctrine to an improper tribunal. It brings incompetent evidence. It is not a question dependent on human opinions, however respectable and worthy of credit; it appeals to one, single, and transcendently higher umpire—the word of God. But what then? Who shall judge what the word of God is? Let every man examine for himself, as he that must give an account, and so judge. If he finds the doctrine therein, let him embrace it; if not, let him reject it! This is all—this is plain!

2. A second objection is alleged against this doctrine not unlike the former. It is said the doctrine cannot be true because it does not accord with the experience of the Church! Christians have not found this doctrine to be true in their experience. The Church, the collective body—the separate individuals, have not attained this state. But few have in any age pretended so much, and they have generally given sad and abundant proof of their delusion. How is this? Is the experience of the whole Christian Church of no value? Does it weigh nothing upon a point of such moment, and so eminently experimental? Must not he be accounted fanatical who lifts a standard of experience higher than that acknowledged by the universal Church? Surely it must require wonderful faith for such a belief.

Now, admit all that is asked for in this objection—that

the universal experience of the Church is against the doctrine—that but few have embraced it in the profession, and that these were certainly all deluded,—admit all this; and what then? Does the objection destroy the doctrine? Does it impair it in the slightest degree? Certainly not. No more than the unanimous experience of all sinners that justifying grace has not been realized to them, is proof that there is no such state possible. The doctrine is not what the Church has attained, but what it is her privilege to attain,—not how unholy she has been, but how *holy* she might have been. The experience of the Church is not that the state is not attainable, but that it is not attained. And again, it is not a question to be settled by experience, but by the word of the Lord, and experience corroborating the word, when there is experience.

But again, the objection assumes what is not true, that all experience is against it. It is admitted that some experience, yea, the mass, does not come up to it, but no experience is against it. And as has been shown in a former chapter, some experience fully and forever asserts it. Experience is not competent evidence against, but it is good proof in favour of this doctrine. This objection then weighs nothing.

3. But, third, it is objected, that it is contrary to the word of God. Now, if this can be shown, we shall admit our error, and renounce even what we think we are conscious is the truth.

But there must be some mistake here. We have shown in a manner which our adversaries cannot gainsay, that the Scriptures authorize the doctrine; and this in a great variety of methods, with great clearness and frequency. It is not readily to be credited that the same inspired

authority teaches another doctrine contrary to this so explicitly inculcated: still there may be something resembling it.

What then are passages introduced as bearing against our position, and which are deemed sufficient to require its surrender?

(1.) We are referred to that striking passage: "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." Gal. v, 17. This text is an expletive of the verse immediately preceding, and of course teaches precisely the same thing. Read the former and you have the meaning of this: "Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh." How explicit! Then ensues the explanation: "*For* the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh—these are contrary the one to the other." If you follow the one, you must renounce the other; "If you walk in the Spirit, you cannot do as your carnal desires would dictate, these you must renounce." So far is this passage from teaching the inevitability of walking in fleshly lust, that, on the contrary, it expressly enjoins abstinence from all such corrupting passions, and commands a state of spirituality, which excludes all improper carnality. The plain meaning of the passage is not, as an objector understands it, that the Christian cannot walk in the Spirit as he would: but it is this; if he does walk in the Spirit, he cannot at the same time do as he would under temptation, in complying with his improper fleshly desires.

(2.) A second passage of which great use is made is this of John. "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." This passage is relied on with considerable confidence as a clear declaration against

our views; nay, it is confidently asserted to settle the question entirely and conclusively against us. If that portion of the text we have referred to, and which our opponents are careful to give without its connexions, were complete in itself, and found no modification in the context, it would, indeed, war with much weight upon and against us. But the candid reader must perceive in a moment, that when fully understood, it is not only not adverse to our views, but, with the context, constitutes one of our clearest supports. "But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us *from all sin.* If we say that we have no sin [have not sinned, and do not need cleansing] we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. [But] if we confess our sins [that we have sinned] he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from *all unrighteousness.*" Thus it is clear that the passage does not assert that we may not now be freed from sin, but that we have not always been so; on the contrary, its true meaning is, that though we certainly are all sinners, having sinned, we may now be freed from *all sin,* and cleansed from *all unrighteousness.* There could scarcely be found a more conclusive passage in support of our views. If one is forgiven "*all sin,*" and is cleansed "from all unrighteousness," does any sin, does any unrighteousness remain? When all is gone, is any left? Yet this connexion asserts unequivocally that all sin, all unrighteousness, shall be removed on certain conditions. How strange that such a text should be quoted to prove that freedom from sin is not attainable in this life!

(3.) "Who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?" Prov. xx, 9. This is referred to as a

proof that no man can be clean and pure from sin. It is understood, and correctly so, to be an interrogative form of affirmation. But what does it affirm? That no one can be cleansed from his sin? Certainly not. To suppose it did would be to bring it in direct conflict with the Apostle, and other inspired sentiments, when he says, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." But more; any one who will consider the context must soon be convinced that the text is not intended to assert anything respecting the possibility of attaining holiness, but simply it is an affirmation that all have sinned—that no man can with truth say, with respect to his past life, I am guiltless—my heart is clean—I am free from sin, or I have not sinned. To make the text declare that it is impossible for any man to be delivered from his sin, is to make it speak a language never intended, and in conflict with the whole word of God.

(4.) "If I say, I am perfect, it shall also prove me perverse." Job ix, 20. This, also, is sometimes quoted against the doctrine of possible holiness. How preposterous! Suppose it were admitted, as a proof that Job was not a perfect man in his own judgment; what would this bear against the doctrine? It asserts nothing respecting other men—nothing respecting possible attainment. At most, it can only be considered as a confession of individual imperfection, which determines nothing as to the possibility of attaining a perfect state, and nothing as to its actual attainment, on the part of others. In the immediate context, indeed, both the possibility of such attainment and its actual realization are admitted. "He destroyeth the perfect and the wicked," implying that there are perfect as well as wicked. But again, it is by no means certain that the text asserts

even that Job was not perfect. It may, and in all probability does, assert simply that he had been a sinner—that the judgments sent upon him were deserved, because he could not answer one sin of a thousand that he had committed, he had no right therefore to complain. To construe this language, as applicable to all Christians at all times, is as unwarrantable as to apply all Job's words concerning himself to all other men.

(5.) "If they sin against thee, (for there is no man that sinneth not.") 1 Kings viii, 46. This passage, taken in its utmost force, only asserts that there is no man that is not a sinner—that has not sinned,—which we as earnestly contend for as our opponents. It says nothing as to the impossibility of being saved from our sins, which is now the only question. But it is manifest, as has been clearly proved by various commentators, that the real meaning of the passage is, "If they shall sin against thee, (for there is no man that may not sin.") And so the text is no more than an assertion, that no man is infallible; that while men live they are liable to sin; not that they actually do sin, but that they may sin. This, by competent critics, is declared to be the real meaning of the passage; and certainly in no other view does the reading make good sense. Let any one be at the pains to read the context, and he will be convinced of this. But, so understood, it bears nothing against our view; as we fully admit that perfect and holy men may fall away from their perfectness, and, as the text asserts, may sin: the text is in most complete harmony with our views.

(6.) "For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not." Eccl. vii, 20. This passage is supposed to be entirely conclusive. But is it? What is its precise bearing?

Were we to allow it the utmost force of which it is capable, it would only teach, that no one really does attain to a sinless state, not that the attainment is impossible. It could not, by any criticism, logical or philological, be made to bear against our proposition. But we shall now show that it has not, and cannot have, the first meaning. It neither declares a sinless state unattainable, nor that it is not in reality attained; and so does not practically bear either against the doctrine or experience.

This passage, it is admitted by the learned of all schools, should be differently rendered, so as to read, "There is not a righteous man upon earth, who does good, and *may not sin.*" The passage thus rendered is precisely synonymous with the one above noticed, "If they sin against thee, (for there is no man that sinneth not,"—*that may not sin.* This rendering is sustained by many versions, and by distinguished critics, some of whom deny the doctrine for which we contend. For an able and learned examination of this point, the reader is referred to the excellent treatise on Christian Perfection, by Dr. Peck, p. 280. In the same work there is a learned disquisition on the passage in the seventh of Romans, to which the reader is referred, if in any doubt as to its meaning.

(7.) "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect." Phil. iii, 12. This is quoted as proof against us; but in manifest misapprehension of its meaning. A critical or even plain scrutiny of the connexions, will show that it has no relation to the subject whatever. "On this passage," says Mahan, "I remark, 1st, From a comparison of this passage with the phrase in verse 15, 'Let us, therefore, as many as be perfect,' it is evident the Apostle considered himself perfect in one sense, in another imper-

fect. Why then is the inference directly drawn, that in verse 12 he affirms his imperfection in holiness, when the opposite conclusion is fully sustained by verse 15? But, 2d, The Apostle, it is perfectly evident from the context, is not here speaking of sanctification at all. There are three senses, somewhat differing the one from the other, in which the verb here rendered perfect, as well as the adjective from which it is derived, are used in the Bible. 1. To designate moral perfection, or entire sanctification in holiness, as in Matt. v, 48: 'Be ye therefore perfect.' 2. Maturity in Christian knowledge and virtue, 1 Cor. ii, 6: 'We speak wisdom to them that are perfect.' 3. Exaltation to a state of rewards, or happiness, in a future world, in consequence of a life of devotion to the Divine service in the present world: thus, in Heb. ii, 10, Christ, as the Captain of our salvation, is said to have been made 'perfect;' that is, advanced to a state of glory, through, or on account of suffering. 'Among the Greeks,' says Prof. Stewart, speaking upon the passage last referred to, 'this verb was employed to designate the condition of those who, having run in the stadium, and proved to be victorious in the contest, were proclaimed as successful combatants, and had the honours and rewards of victory bestowed upon them. Such persons were said to be perfect, or to have been perfected. Now that the Apostle uses the term perfect in this last sense exclusively, in the verse under consideration, is demonstrably evident, from the fact that he was writing to Greeks, and uses it with reference to the very custom in regard to which they had been accustomed to use the term in this one sense only. He represented himself as running a race, but not as being perfect; that is, not having been advanced to a state of glory, in consequence of having

victoriously finished his course. It is, then, in reference to having finished his course and received the conqueror's reward, and not in reference to moral perfection, that the Apostle uses the term perfect in this passage.'" This, I am confident, is the only view that can be taken of these connexions by a candid and intelligent reader. The passage says nothing, is not intended to be understood as saying anything, with respect to the Apostle's moral perfection, but simply that he considered himself a racer yet, and not victorious, not through his course.

These are the most important Scripture objections with which I am conversant; others are alleged, but are less grave, and need not here be examined. Any Christian of ordinary understanding will find no difficulty in promptly repelling them.

4. It is objected, further, that the doctrine is promotive of pride, phariseeism, self-righteousness, and elevated views of one's self; leading him to say to his brother in an inferior state of grace, "Stand there, I am holier than thou." But there could not be a greater mistake than this. One of the elements of holiness is perfect humility. If any profess it, and yet are proud and pharisaical, it is proof that they are deceived. Those, indeed, who enjoy this state of grace, may in truth believe themselves to be in a higher state than the merely justified Christian; but they know it is of grace, and, with respect to themselves, the clearer light they have received leads them to true discoveries of their own utter unworthiness. Their sense of need and dependence is heightened, in proportion as their sense of weakness and sinfulness out of Christ is increased. They have seen enough of themselves to humble them into the very dust of self-abasement. Pride would forfeit the very blessing they pro-

fess to have attained. The objection, if it implies that superior grace engenders pride, bears as fatally against justification; because the state of the justified is superior to unregeneracy, it must therefore tend to pride and lifting up.

5. It is objected, that those who make profession of holiness are no better than other people. [Upon this we shall remark more at length in the chapter on hinderances.] Suppose this were admitted, and there is but too much ground for it, it is mournful that it is so. Yet what does it bear against the doctrine? If all were hypocrites, or deluded, who make the profession, it does not affect the merits of the case in the slightest degree. It condems them, but militates nothing against this. Its truth stands upon the authority of God's word—not upon human professions. But who made us judges in the case? There is one that judgeth, and who has said to us, Judge not. May not much that we charge as sins against good men, at last be nothing more than weaknesses and infirmities? And again, amid the many deluded and deceived, have you found none, in the judgment of charity, who gave good evidence that they had entered into this high and holy state? Not one? If not, your position must have been unfortunate indeed. If so, you admit yourself, that in some cases there is good proof that holiness is attainable and has been attained.

6. But after all, you object that the thing is impossible; that in this world a man cannot live without sin. Has God said so? If he were left to himself it might be admitted; but cannot God empower him to be free from sin? Reflect: cannot you, by the grace of God, live one minute without sin? If a minute, can you not an hour? if an hour, a day? if a day, a year? You overlook the power of the grace of God. We are weak, and cannot too much distrust

ourselves; but "through Christ strengthening us, we are able to all things." Shall we limit the "Holy One of Israel?" Shall we plead in extenuation of our sins, our weaknesses, our inability, when Christ stands ready, waiting to enter the list for us?

As the man of Pethor said of God's ancient people, "There is no enchantment against Jacob; neither is there any divination against Israel;" so may we say of this doctrine, there is no enchantment against it. Why are objections sought against it? Is it not a beautiful and glorious truth? Why do we contend against it? Behold its array of proof! See how God has "planted a hedge about it," and "fenced it in on every side!" Behold how feeble its gainsayers; how powerless its reprovers! And in passing from the chapter, let the reader consider well the reasons of his opposition. Why do you oppose it? Are you sure it is because you are convinced it is an error? or have you not a less extenuating reason? Look well in the light of God's word and Spirit! May you not, at last, be only apologizing for your sins—pleading for concealed garments, or hidden spies? Is it not out of too great kindness for the inhabitants of the land, whom you are not willing to put to the sword? O that you may be led to right conclusions, and know and enjoy all that it is your privilege to realize of grace here, and finally come to the enjoyment of eternal glory hereafter! Amen.

## CHAPTER V.

### MEANS FOR THE ATTAINMENT OF HOLINESS.

As we advance in the contemplation of our theme, to the practical Christian every step becomes more and more intensely interesting. What at first engaged his attention as a mere speculative inquiry, becomes, in the progress, a subject of all-engrossing practical moment: no longer a mere querist, he has become a serious and concerned seeker. Charmed with the "beauty of holiness," and convinced that it is both his duty and his privilege to possess it for himself, his own feeling now is, how shall I attain? "How shall I come and appear before God?" At times, it may be, discouraged; with an oppressing sense of his own vileness, or disheartened in consequence of the very brilliancy of the prize, he is tempted to despair: but again urged on by a returning and increased realization of his wants, and impelled forward by a rising hope of at least compensating success, he is incited to new endeavours. But what shall he do? He has often endeavoured before, only to incur the grief of failure. How now shall he be more successful? Or opening his spiritual eyes, it may be for the first time, to behold the glorious Canaan, he would at once set forward to possess it. Who will guide him over the intervening wilderness, and across the opposing Jordan? Who will bring him to feast upon the rich clusters, and to enjoy the delicious fruits of the land?

We hope, reader, unless you have already entered, and become a dweller in the land, that some such is your feeling; that you are now anxious to "pass over." But if it

should be, that, like Reuben, and Gad, and Manasseh, you have been content to settle down on this side the Jordan, finding *it* a *goodly* and *pleasant* country; and if, even yet, you should be satisfied to remain here, because "of its fertility" and abundance, I trust you will remain content no longer. Goodly, and pleasant, and abundant, as you have found "Heshbon," and "Gilead," and "Bashan,"—more glorious by far than Egypt,—places of delightful rest from the toils and *dangers* of the wilderness; yet they are not the promised inheritance; their richness and fertility is not the exuberance of the heritage of God's people; they abound not with the "figs, and pomegranates, and clusters" of the covenanted possession; they are not as "Hebron" and "Bethel," as "Eshcol" and "Beulah"—as that "Hephzibah" in which the Lord delighteth, "and which floweth with milk and honey."

Ah! but you say, we have heard of the land! There are "walled cities" there; "the people be strong that dwell" there; there are "the children of Anak," the "Amalekites," and "Hittites," and "Jebusites," and "Amorites;" and they are fortified in the fastnesses of the country, and possess the mountains; and we be few and feeble! How can we go up, for we are not able? Say not so! This was the account of the unfaithful spies; Caleb and Joshua had "another spirit." They said, "Let us go up at once and possess it, for we are well able to overcome it:" Yea, "If the Lord delight in us, then he will bring us into this land, and give it us, a land which floweth with milk and honey." "Only rebel not ye against the Lord, neither fear ye the people of the land; for they are bread for us: their defence is departed from them, and the Lord is with us: fear them not."

Thank God, many are wont to join themselves with Joshua, and say, "we are able!" Some *have gone over*, and are marching through the length and breadth of the land; many *are going* over; and many more are looking wishfully after their brethren, who have courageously advanced and taken possession. O that there may be a general movement, a simultaneous uprising, and shout of "onward" among the "sacramental host" under the guidance of their spiritual Joshua; and in harmonious union may they go forward, ceasing not, until their enemies are slain, and they come into the heritage which is theirs by "everlasting covenant;" ceasing not, until the whole Church, resplendent "as a bride adorned for her husband," shall be seen standing upon the sunny mount of holiness, wearing the diadem and encircled with the girdle of untarnished truth and righteousness; ceasing not, "until they all come, in unity of faith, and the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ;" until they all, the whole Church, "comprehend with all saints, what is the length, and breadth, and depth, and height, and know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, and are filled with all the fulness of God!"

The present chapter will be devoted to an exhibition of the means by which holiness is attained, and is designed to aid any, and all, who may be seeking this great blessing. Holiness, like every other blessing offered in the Gospel, is to be obtained by "faith." But although this is so, the bare declaration of the fact leaves the subject in great obscurity, and affords but little assistance to the mind inquiring the way; indeed, I am inclined to think that the manner in which faith has been inculcated by many, in connexion with this experience, has unhappily perplexed and intrica-

cised the whole matter. It is universally well enough known that faith is the condition; but where assistance is needed is at these points: what is faith, and how may it be exercised? How often have I myself exclaimed, and how often have I heard others, with agonizing distress, exclaim, when exhorted to believe, to exercise "simple faith:" What must I believe? how can I believe? This common—I had like to have said universal exclamation—indicates where the true difficulty lies.

Let us endeavour to give some plain, practical directions, to assist the seeker right where these difficulties hinder his progress.

And while we point out certain things to be done as aids to faith, let it be remembered that these things are not supposed to be either meritorious, or performed, or performable in our own strength; we can do nothing without gracious aid; we distinctly attribute all our power to work, in the way of seeking, to a gracious ability bestowed upon us, and so acknowledge whatever is done, to be of grace. But as we are dependent upon grace for ability, so grace is always furnished for our use, and we need never be in any want. Thus distinctly acknowledging the whole to be of grace, we shall now state what by the aid of grace we are to do as co-workers with God: "Working out our own salvation with fear and trembling, while he worketh in us to will and do of his own good pleasure."

Faith, in order to its exercise, presupposes a certain state of the mind and affections, and without these it cannot exist—its very existence includes them: namely, in the briefest terms, it supposes the knowledge of sin and sorrow for it, the knowledge that there is a Saviour, and a readiness to embrace Him.

Now, this state of mind and affections must be superinduced in order to faith; there must be a proper amount of information, and a proper state of the affections with relation to it. Here, then, is where the work should begin. We will, in as plain and simple a manner as possible, give such directions as we think may be of service to those who are seeking this state, or who are desirous to seek it. Reader, are you among the number? Are you? You are a member of the Church,—you have made some progress in the Divine life; but are you in the enjoyment of your privilege? Are you as holy a man as you desire to be, as by *grace you may be?* If not, do you now desire to take advanced ground? If this be your desire, and I pray God it may be, the following advices are intended to assist you to find out the way more clearly:—

1. And first, endeavour to have a clear and distinct view of the thing at which you aim—have the mark definitely in your mind.

The importance of this is obvious. An endeavour implies an object; to be wisely and successfully put forth, it must be in the right direction, towards the object. The object must, therefore, be clearly apprehended. Before the mind can act intelligently in regard to a thing, it must have an intelligent conception of the thing. But when we say, "Endeavour to have a clear and distinct idea of the object at which you aim," we do not mean that you are to comprehend it in all its minutiæ; that you are to understand all concerning it, in the detail—but *simply*, "what it is." How shall you obtain this definite idea? By reading—particularly the Scriptures—conversation, meditation, and prayer. With a sincere desire, and humble prayer, you will not need to linger long; the discovery will soon be made.

2. And now, having obtained a clear discovery of your privilege; in the second place, endeavour to realize your need. This is a most important advice indeed; almost every thing depends, in the issue, upon the turn matters take here. If you have no sense of need, you will assuredly make no progress. If, with them of Laodicea, you say, "I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing,"—I have religion enough—I see no special reason for making so much ado about the matter; if such, or anything resembling this, is your feeling, you will not soon occupy advanced ground. Seek to realize your wants. But how shall you do this? Look at yourself, then look at holiness! O that I could prevail upon you to be faithful here! What do you find to be your real condition? You are converted, I know; a great work has been wrought in you, and wrought for you. You are "an heir of God, and a joint heir with Jesus Christ." You have a well-grounded hope of heaven, "a prospect full of immortality and eternal life." I know this, and rejoice with you that it is so. You cannot too greatly prize the glorious treasure conferred upon you. You would be base and ungrateful not to esteem, or lightly to esteem, "the grace wherein you stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." But allowing all this, is there not something more wanted in your experience? Do not answer this hastily—do not turn from it indifferently. With sincere prayer for the aid and guidance of the Holy Ghost, take the lamp of truth—the Bible—and conscience, and enter into your heart and make diligent search. Be candid with yourself. Make no extenuation, no apology, use no tenderness. Ferret every recess thoroughly—probe to the bottom—pass through every [redacted] your soul—search it through and through, [redacted]

tion to know your case, to look at yourself stript of every disguise. What do you find? Are there no idols in the sacred temple? No "images of gold?" no "Babylonish garments?" no concealed "spies?" No pride, no envy, no jealousy, no anger, no malice, no undue love of the world, no undue desire for the praise of men, no improper ambition? Does God possess your heart without a rival? Are you wholly the Lord's? O for faithfulness! Would you attain to holiness? Linger at this point. Have no mercy on yourself, be resolved to know the worst! You may have such discoveries as will astonish and distress you, still make diligent search. What is your example? Is it all that a Christian ought to be? Do you daily exhibit, in the family, in the social circle, in your business, everywhere, those tempers which should adorn the Christian character? What is your influence? Is it, so far as it is under your control, always decidedly and undividedly for Christ? With these and such questions, closely investigate your condition, praying for light, and guidance, and conviction. What is the result? Do you find a great want? Are there sins remaining within, that need to be cast out? What now? Do you feel your need? If not, dwell upon it, in earnest prayer for the enlightening agency of the Spirit, until you do feel. But surely, if you are a Christian, you are not without deep and constant feeling already.

And upon this point let us add, that this discovery of your destitution of holiness and sense of want, will be accompanied with the deepest contrition and self-abasement—penitence for having so long lived beneath privilege, below duty. If the work of forgiveness is preceded by godly sorrow as well as confiding faith, so also is the greater and still more glorious work of holiness—a sorrow, it may be,

not attended with the same bitterness, and doubt, and fear, which usually attend initial repentance, but possessing quite as much of grief and self-deprecation. And what more can be necessary to gain this penitence than a discovery of facts? Surely, when we see ourselves, our hearts will melt within us. We shall see, nay, we shall feel, "'Tis worse than death our God to love, and not our God alone."

We have said nothing, and shall say nothing particularly, upon the subject of fasting, as a means to this blessing, except here to remark, that when the soul is filled with sorrow and anguish, if we find no rest in ordinary means, it may aid us if we give ourselves to fasting. Various mortifications have been resorted to by some, as bodily or physical chastisements. This is a relic of Popery, and, in our estimation, is neither requisite nor profitable; good may, indeed, in some cases, follow such tokens of humiliation, but is not produced by them, and should never be sought in dependence upon them. What is required is not abuse, but the due government of the body; and fasting, or abstinence, is only to be exercised so far forth as it may tend to teach us our dependence, express our contrition, and assist our spiritual exercises; and not as inflictions or penalties upon ourselves, by which we merit favour.

There may, indeed, be peculiar appetites and desires, which, to a certain extent, are innocent; but which, because of their too great power, from long indulgence or other causes, require to be entirely mortified for the present, until they are subjugated, and the persecuted spirit gains the mastery: where this is the case, the Spirit will give light, and we may safely wait for his guidance.

3. Having thus obtained a distinct view of holiness, and having made a discovery of your own wants and defects—

of your remaining sinfulness—you have gained an important point. Are you now willing and desirous to be made holy? This is the next thing to be secured—willingness. It is possible for a man to perceive his sins, and yet be unwilling to give them up. Many do this. How is it with you? Are you now willing to give up all your idols, to "cut off right arms," to "pluck out right eyes," to sacrifice your lust? Look well to this! How vain to expect, or pretend even to desire, salvation from all sin, at the same time that you are retaining some in the heart! Would you be holy, you must make up your mind to the crucifixion of every sin; they must be surrendered and given to the cross and spear.

Holiness! Are you willing to receive it? with all its consequences—of watchfulness, and sacrifice, and self-denial, and entire devotion of the soul and life to God? Not only are you willing, thus to be freed from sin, and to take the responsibility of holiness; but are you desirous to do so? Is it the supreme wish of your heart? Are you willing, in proof of your sincerity and preference, to accept it in lieu of everything besides?

4. Still further: it is not only needful that you become willing and desirous upon the subject, but you must likewise come to the firm purpose and resolution that through grace you will be holy; that you will never rest short of this state; that at all hazards you will persevere, and never cease the effort until you attain. If you find it difficult to form the purpose; if there is discernible a remaining feeling, that, if you should not immediately succeed, perhaps, you may give over the struggle; pray, and agonize, for the victory here: never rest until your mind is determined. Nothing great can be accomplished without resolution. An "unstable" or "double mind" cannot prosper. Be firmly

resolved, therefore, that you will attain, that you will contend for and claim your privilege.

Some commence seeking God—engage in the pursuit of holiness—without decided purpose to succeed. They have a will to commence working, but not a will to do all that may be necessary to be done—to make all requisite sacrifices—to persevere through every opposition. This may be your case; if so, stop short, and resolve firmly, irrevocably, that you will be for God wholly. You will never go beyond your will. When you endeavour without its concurrence, it will amount to nothing. Will; then work, when you have the will! Your desires are set upon holiness: now resolve, that, it being your privilege, you will have it by God's grace; and set forward and endeavour after it, according to your light. It is not presumed, in this advice, that you purpose, in your own strength, to make this great attainment; it is not supposed that your willing secures it; but only that it leads you forward to God, who will bestow it upon you, when you come to him. It is not, will to be holy, and be holy; but will not to cease until God shall confer the grace, of his own free goodness. The importance of this invincible resolution or willing, must appear in one moment.

The work of resisting every sin—crucifying every improper desire, being entirely for God—will meet with opposition, strong opposition; a feeble purpose will soon yield; the soul will relapse into its former state. The work will not be accomplished; not because it was impossible, but because there was not the requisite resolution. A man is dying of a tumour; he wishes it removed, and goes to a surgeon; but the knives intimidate him—his resolution fails; he returns with the fatal tumour still upon him. Would

you be holy? Learn by this illustration the value of resolution—resolution that will not cower when the knife is laid to the heart, to amputate its idols.

5. The purpose now being formed, the next point is entire consecration,—the giving up of yourself to God—your soul, your body, your time, your talents, your influence, your all; withdrawing all from the world, and from sin, and from self, and giving all in complete sacrifice to God, to be his and his alone forever. Will you do this? Examine yourself closely in this connexion. Are you willing to devote all, entirely, forever, to the Lord? Holiness implies this: if we are not willing to the consecration, we are not willing, and hence not ready for holiness. Here again, you will need grace, to enable you to make the consecration. You cannot do it in your own strength. You will need to pray, and look to God for the assistance of the Spirit. Thus doing, bring forth everything separately—yourself, your family, your reputation, your property; and, with all sincerity, relinquish all claim, and surrender the whole to God, to use and enjoy them only as he directs, and with reference to his glory; never to withdraw again what you thus solemnly covenant away. Will you now do this? Is this your mind?

A word more upon this point: consecration is not sanctification, it is a part of it. Consecration is your work, God giving the requisite grace; when it is entire, sanctification, which is the work of the Holy Spirit, follows, always follows, immediately follows. But more particularly, what is consecration? It is entire dedication to God; in other words, complete acquiescence in his will, and reference to his glory. It does not imply that we retire from the world; that we give ourselves all the time to religious exercises;

that we withhold communion with our fellow-men; that we give our entire thoughts, affections, and efforts, to technically religious duties: such a thing would be impracticable in this world, would conflict with the expressed will of God, and would be itself therefore sinful. We have business to do, to provide for our households, and to enable us to do good; our thoughts may be given to this: we have families and friends, we may love them:—nay, these are a part of our duty. By consecration to God, therefore, we mean simply, as expressed above, a supreme reference to the will and glory of God, in all things: using and enjoying all, as he wills we should, disclaiming any rights that conflict with his rights; pursuing such business, and in such measure, as from our best light we believe is the will of God; using all the proceeds of our labour, precisely as we believe God directs; loving these objects, and in that degree, which he approves; doing those acts which will be for his glory; living in the world, but living for God. Whoever does this, consecrates himself to God. He may be in the midst of men, and earnest and industrious; but if he is entire in these respects, he is only the Lord's. His sanctified life, so far as it emanates from him, will be no more than this consecration perpetuated through every minute and every day; so far as it proceeds from God, it will be a perpetual indwelling of God: of such an one it may be said, he lives not, but God liveth in him. His sole reference, as to all things, is the will of God; and with this he never allows his thoughts, affections, *will*, or actions, to conflict. Who will say this is not entire consecration? Who will say it is not duty? Who will say it is not by the grace of God possible?

In this connexion there is, in our estimation, unfortunate and injurious advice sometimes given, in some such language

as the following:—"Bring your all and lay it on God's altar; believe it is accepted; and though you may have no direct witness, no special sensible change, do not doubt but it is done; the altar sanctifieth the gift; whatsoever toucheth the altar is holy,"—and much more of this kind. I must believe that such instructions tend to delusion, and have been the fruitful source of many spurious, though sincere professions. It is well, nay, it is indispensable, to make an entire surrender of all to God; and when this is done, God will acknowledge it, by sending the witness of his acceptance; but let no one, at his peril, conclude that he has made this surrender, and is consequently sanctified, without the requisite witness: he will only deceive himself, and receive no benefit. His faith, however strong, being false, will do him no good. It is the Spirit which sanctifies, and he sanctifies through faith, not in any act of ours, but faith in God; and when by faith he sanctifies, he will impart the witness. It is meet, when we have consecrated our all as well as we can, that we should trust in God; not in our act, but in God: not that he has sanctified, because we have consecrated ourselves, but that he will accept the consecration and send us the witness. Until the witness comes, we will not say we are sanctified, we will not even believe we are; we will look to be, and wait in expectation until we are, and then we will rest in God.

6. Have you a definite view of holiness? Do you realize your need of it? Are you willing to receive it? Is it your desire and purpose to persevere until you obtain it; and, in order thereto, do you realize a readiness to give up all to God, in entire consecration? If this should be your mind, one thing more and the work will be done; "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."

Faith, as was remarked in the out-start of these advices, is the only condition upon which the blessings of the gospel are offered. "Justification" is by faith—"regeneration" is by faith—"sanctification" is by faith—"glorification" is by faith—by faith as the instrument, and by the blood of Jesus as the merit, and by the Spirit as the agent. Whenever faith is exercised, the work will be done. The preceding advices are only prescribed as means of assisting—as co-operating with the grace of God to bring the mind up to the point of faith—to prepare us for this saving exercise. And let it not be supposed that a long and tedious process is necessary, in order to this preparation. With diligent application, and by Divine assistance, the work may soon be accomplished.

And now we again distinctly repeat, "it is by simple faith." "Believe, and thou shalt be saved." But how and what are you to believe? If the previous advices have been complied with, this is soon and easily answered: but if not, it is vain to talk to you of faith; for, as remarked, without a proper state of mind and the affections, faith is impossible. However directly faith is wrought in the soul, and however sudden the work of sanctification, still intervening is this preparation of mind, which goes before, or if not before, along with faith. But now do you see the prize—"holiness?" Do you feel your need of it? Are you willing to receive it? More, are you desirous to obtain, and resolved not to stop short? Are you enabled to consecrate your all to God—to give up all for this blessing? Is this your feeling? Is it? Are you waiting now? Then believe! The work will be done. Believe what? Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as your Saviour. Trust him to do the work now, just as you are!

It may be important to be still more explicit at this point. Faith includes the ideas both of "belief and trust," and exists in various stages.

1. A general belief in Christ, as the Saviour and sanctifier.
2. Belief that he is able to sanctify us.
3. Belief that he is willing to do it.
4. Belief that he is able and willing to do it now, not to-morrow.
5. Belief that he has promised to do the work, and that his promise will not fail.
6. Belief that if I now have faith, he will now, this moment, do it.
7. Reliance, or trust in him now, this moment, to do, accompanied with a belief that he doeth it. Mark, that he now, when I believe according to his promise, doeth it; not a belief that it is done, but, accompanying my faith, it being a sound faith, that he doeth the work.

These, as we believe, are the almost invariable stages, or progressive steps of faith; the mind is thus led along, by easy and regular process, to that reliance—to that taking God at his word, which brings the promised blessing. These various and successive grades of faith may not indeed sensibly take place in the soul; the mind may not detect their existence as elements; but they are, nevertheless, included in the faith which sanctifies.

An error has gained considerable prevalence, and has wrought not a little evil, in relation to this very subject—the faith which brings the sanctifying grace.

It has been indiscreetly said, "We are to believe the work is done, and it will be done." Persons seeking the blessing have been told that they must believe they are sanctified, and they will be sanctified. What a misfortune that so

great, so dangerous an error should be taught, in connexion with so important a subject! What a manifest absurdity! Making our sanctification to depend upon the belief of an untruth; namely, a belief that it is now wrought, in order that it may be wrought! This is a great delusion. It is not the doctrine of the Bible. It is not, and never was, the doctrine of our Church. Some sincere and honest Christians have fallen into this delusion without perceiving its absurdity; and it has gained considerable currency. I trust it will no more find place in the language of the friends of this glorious doctrine.

The stages of faith, immediately at the point of sanctification, and just before, and right after it, may thus be described. And now let it be remembered, that when this exercise of faith takes place, it is not a mere intellectual calculation; it occurs when the soul is travailing for sanctifying power—when it is groaning for deliverance from distressing sinfulness—when it is giving up all to Christ—when it is feeling that "it is worse than death its God to love, and not its God alone"—when it is purposing to claim and obtain holiness, at all hazards. That is the state of the soul: it is now agonizing at God's altar; it is pleading for salvation—looking at the promises; the Holy Spirit is helping, imparting illumination, and strengthening the faltering faith. Now comes the moment when sanctification is about to be imparted. Now the soul believes it will be done, just now; taking firmer hold of the promises, and looking steadfastly upon the atoning sacrifice—now the intercessor, it believes it is being done; the refining fire touches it, "as the coal Isaiah's lips;" it yields, it trusts—the work is done; and now the soul, sanctified, believes it is done. The belief that it will be done—that it is doing, are the trust which brings

the blessing; the belief that it is done follows after. They are each distinct, though all may occur in the interval of a minute.

One passage of Scripture is sometimes quoted in this connexion, which, because of its obvious bearing on the point, ought to be noticed here: "What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them." Mark xi, 24. The doctrine sometimes supposed to be taught in this passage, is precisely that which we have just now condemned as absurd and dangerous. Whatever is its teaching, this it cannot be. Several commentators have avoided saying anything upon it; among those who have spoken, Mr. Watson's views seem to me most correct. He says: "An ill use has sometimes been made of this passage; as though it meant, that when praying, whatever we believe, that is, persuade ourselves that we receive, we do receive—an absurdity and self-contradiction. Here, however, to believe does not signify to persuade ourselves into an opinion, but to trust, or to have faith in God. This trust must necessarily be regulated by God's own *promise* and *warrant*, and it is exercised in order that we may receive. The sense therefore is, believe—trust—that ye shall receive them, and ye shall obtain them; that is, all things which God hath expressly promised, and which are, as St. John states, 'according to his will.'" This view of Mr. Watson we believe to be the sober and true view of the passage. It is no more than an encouragement to unwavering confidence and trust in God, which is the best definition of faith; leading us, when we desire anything which God has promised, to ask him, without doubting, that he will fulfil his own word; meantime, just as confidently expecting to obtain what we ask, as though we already had it in possession.

There is one more common error in these connexions; and this respects the manner in which faith is spoken of, leaving the impression that it is mere belief—that all one has to do to be sanctified is to believe—losing sight of the necessity of a proper state of the affections, and of the difference between a mere belief, and a confiding trust, accompanied with such feelings of the heart as alone can produce it.

This is what Mr. Wesley says: "But what is that faith whereby we are sanctified, saved from sin, and perfected in love? This faith is a divine evidence and conviction,—1. That God hath promised this sanctification in the Holy Scriptures. Till we are thoroughly satisfied of this, there is no moving one step further. And one would imagine there needed not one word more to satisfy a reasonable man of this than the ancient promise: 'Then will I circumcise thy heart to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.' How clearly does this express the being perfected in love! How imply the being saved from all sin! For as long as love takes up the whole heart, what room is there for sin therein?

"2. It is a Divine evidence and conviction, that what God hath promised he is able to perform. Admitting, therefore, that with men it is impossible to bring a clean thing out of an unclean—to purify the heart from all sin and to fill it with all holiness—yet this creates no difficulty in the case, seeing with God all things are possible. And surely no one ever imagined it was possible to any power less than the Almighty! But if God speaks it shall be done. God said, 'Let there be light, and there was light.'

"3. It is Divine evidence and conviction that he is able and willing to do it now. And why not? Is not a moment to him the same as a thousand years? He cannot

want more time to accomplish whatever is his will. And he cannot stay for any more worthiness or fitness in the persons he is pleased to honour. We may therefore boldly say, at any point of time, 'Now is the day of salvation.' 'To-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.' 'Behold, all things are now ready, come unto the marriage.'

"4. To this confidence, that God is able and willing to sanctify us now, there needs to be added one thing more—a divine evidence and conviction that he *doeth* it." But this is a different thing from believing that he *hath* accomplished it. Some have supposed that, to obtain the evidence of sanctification, *you must believe the work accomplished, and profess it.* But this is not the thing intended, says Mr. Merritt, and properly. You cannot rightly believe the work is accomplished before the evidence is produced in your soul. But you may believe that he doeth it; that is, that he is doing it, that he has begun, is carrying on, and is ready and willing on his part now to accomplish it. If you believe this, and at the same time keep in view that your complete sanctification is contained in the gospel offer and promise, you will be enabled to embrace it. And when you have done so, you will know that it is in your possession. The object of your faith is not so properly something to be done, as something that already exists. And what is that which already exists, but the promise made for your entire sanctification; the offer and promise of this in the gospel; the beginning of the work in your soul; the continued agency of the Holy Ghost in exciting your desires for it, and prompting and assisting your efforts to lay hold upon it? When you believe this with a full reliance, the blessing is yours. In that hour it is done. God says to the inmost soul, "according to thy faith be it unto thee." Then the

soul is pure from every spot of sin; it is clean from all unrighteousness. The believer then experiences the deep meaning of these solemn words: "If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin!'

"Q. How are we to wait for this change?

"A. Not in careless indifference, or indolent inactivity; but in vigorous, universal obedience, in a zealous keeping of all the commandments, in watchfulness and painfulness, in denying ourselves and taking up our cross daily; as well as in earnest prayer and fasting, and a close attendance on all the ordinances of God. And if any man dream of attaining it any other way, (yea, or of keeping it when it is attained, when he has received it even in the largest measure,) he deceiveth his own soul. It is true, we receive it by simple faith: but God does not, will not, give that faith, unless we seek it with all diligence, in the way which he hath ordained.

"This consideration may satisfy those who inquire why so few have received the blessing. Inquire how many are seeking it in this way; and you have a sufficient answer.

"Prayer especially is wanting. Who continues instant therein? Who wrestles with God for this very thing? So, 'ye have not, because ye ask not; or because ye ask amiss,' namely, that you may be renewed before you die. *Before you die!* Will that content you? Nay, but ask that it may be done now; to-day, while it is called to-day. Do not call this 'setting God a time.' Certainly to-day is his time as well as to-morrow. Make haste, man, make haste!"

After noticing one more abuse we shall close the present chapter. The abuse to which I refer, is the rendering a

profession of sanctification a condition of its attainment. This is even more absurd and anti-Scriptural than the error noticed above. It suspends the blessing, not only upon the belief of a falsehood, but likewise upon the profession of it: "Profess you are sanctified, and you will be." That is, declare an untruth in the most solemn manner, and upon the most serious and sacred circumstances, and it will become a truth—you will obtain holiness. How preposterous! Profession is nowhere required as a condition of salvation; it is required as a duty and propriety after we are saved. The abuse to which I here refer is not Methodism. We teach—we believe no such vagary; and happily its extent is exceedingly limited among others. There is, though, we think, even among some of us, an overanxiousness to extend the profession. It is urged in an unbecoming manner, and, as a consequence, it is often indiscreetly made. Let those who are clear in the enjoyment of holiness, declare it, with becoming meekness and humility; if there is any need, when they are satisfied of their attainment, let them be advised to make a public confession. But let no man be urged to make a profession, the truth of which he does not know certainly, and which he even doubts, with the hope that profession under such circumstances will benefit. It may fasten delusion upon him, but cannot bring him sanctifying grace. If you are sanctified, evidence it when it will be to the glory of God and in a manner befitting so high a state. If you have attained almost, so as to think, perhaps you are sanctified, confess so much, and look for more. If you desire to be sanctified, confess your desire, and contend for the witness. But never fall into the delusion that you must profess beyond what you are persuaded is true. Never declare your attainment to be greater than it is, with the hope

that such a profession will bring you into an advanced and higher enjoyment. This is the direst delusion.

It is implied, of course, in all the foregoing advices, that during the time this struggle is going on, whether a longer or shorter period, you are attentive to all the means of grace, particularly prayer, reading the Holy Word, attendance upon the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, meditation, conversation with those who may be able to give advice, perusing good books on the subject, and all other means, public and private, such as God is wont to own and bless. These things must be done until we attain, and after we attain. But let us beware that we fall not into the error of depending on forms and means. There is no doing without them, but in themselves they are nothing. They are to be received only as aids to saving, to sanctifying faith; as scaffolding about the firm wall of confiding trust. But our only help is in God, who gives efficiency to means.

And now, what more is necessary, seeking soul? Why not, this moment, experience the renovating power? I say, why not? Where is the hindrance? Examine this point closely, that you may see where to seek aid. Do you properly understand the nature of holiness? If so, the want is not here. Do you clearly see, and deeply feel your inbred sins, and your consequent need of this state? Do you? Then the want is not here. Are you willing, and anxious, and resolved to obtain it? Then the want is not here. Are you willing to give up all? you understand this, to consecrate your all—self, family, property, reputation, time, talents, everything, to God; to be his, used for him, enjoyed in him, never withheld or taken from him? Are you? Then the want is not here. Do you believe he is able to

sanctify you? The want is not here. Do you believe that he is willing? Then the want is not here. Do you believe that he has promised? Then the want is not here. Do you believe that he is able and willing, and has promised to do it now, if you have faith? Then the want is not here. Do you believe, then, seeing all this, that he now will do it, now, this moment? Can you trust, in the present tense? now can you commit all? Then, quicker than I can complete this sentence, the work will be done! Is it done? Why not? Why cannot you now trust? O that Heaven may aid your trembling faith, and bring you to the enjoyment of the blessing and the witness!

These means, if employed faithfully, will result in your entire sanctification. With this belief, both experience and the word of God agree. But having said thus much of means, it may be important that we say now, means do not sanctify. No distinct chapter has been assigned to the agency of the Holy Ghost, in the accomplishment of this great change. But this is not because we esteemed it an unimportant point; on the contrary, we hold it to be a cardinal truth. *The Holy Ghost is the great agent in the regeneration and sanctification of souls.* His power alone effects the change. Do not lose sight of this. Do not fall into the delusion that what you do will effect the work. What you want to see is, that in you there is no help—that so far as making yourself holy is concerned, you can absolutely do nothing—that this work is of God, entirely. Here, means do nothing: they only bring you to God, and he sanctifies; without them you cannot come to God, and unless you come he cannot sanctify; but your coming does not sanctify, it brings you to him who does. You employ the means only to bring you in contact with the agency.

It is the fire which refines the gold. Men dig it from the earth, and bring it to the crucible. If it is not put in the flame it will not be refined. The fire does not refine it unless brought; the bringing does not refine: it must be brought, and the fire must exert its agency. The soul is not sanctified by means, nor without them. The means are necessary to bring it to God; when it is brought, God does the work. Remember this, seeking soul; and now, having employed the means, expect God to touch you, and accomplish his promise. Look now away from means—look away from self—trust in him; yea, trust, trust now; fall at his feet, and he will make thee whole!

## CHAPTER VI.

### EVIDENCES BY WHICH ONE MAY KNOW THAT HE IS ENTIRELY SANCTIFIED.

How may one know, after he shall have employed the means prescribed in the foregoing chapter, that they have been effectual—that he has attained the object of his desires?

This is obviously an important question, contemplated in whatever light it may be viewed. To any who may be anxious upon this great subject of personal holiness, it must be invested with peculiar interest. In the goodness of God, we are so constituted, that we cannot rest short of a reasonable certainty, in matters we deem of moment. Doubt torments before the time,—uncertainty generates despair, —suspense, who can bear! Rest, though it be in sheer hopelessness, were almost preferable to the unhappiness of such a state! What perplexity, what tossing upon the pillow, what inward consumings, what heart agonies it occasions! Even *hope deferred* maketh the heart sick!—much more, the uncertainty which destroys its very existence!

But bad as uncertainty is, it is better than false security! Better to be disquieted than rest upon a volcano! Unrest is preferable to slumbers beneath the avalanche!

These remarks are especially applicable to the point in question. Nothing can be more desirable than rest, or certainty; nothing can be more *undesirable* than false rest, insecure certainty. Without assurance as to one's religious state, there can be no present happiness; there can scarcely

be an effort well sustained towards it. With assurance, but upon false grounds, there must be ultimate ruin.

In calling attention, therefore, to some of the evidences upon which one may conclude himself to have attained unto the experience of holiness, and in which he may securely rest, we hope to accomplish two objects. First, to prevent security upon false grounds; and, second, to encourage and lead forward trembling faith to solid rest: so aiding to convince the deluded, and comfort the sincere; to rebuke the hypocrite, and build up the true, but hesitating disciple.

Perhaps one of the principal sources of superficial sanctity, of fanaticism, of false religion, is unfaithfulness in applying the Scriptural tests of Christian character; neglect of the apostle's exhortations: "Examine yourselves—prove your own selves." Perhaps, likewise, one of the chief sources of anxiety and unrest to honest inquirers after holiness, is a want of information at this point; of clear views as to the kind and amount of evidence necessary to authorize assurance. Many absolutely refuse to be satisfied with anything less than miracle; others tremble and fear lest they may rest without sufficient ground; and multitudes are thus hindered, and, no doubt, long prevented, from entering further than the portals of religious experience, by perplexity and confusion upon this subject.

Every stage of religious progress has its distinctive marks, and may be ascertained with great certainty, by giving heed to these. The incipient work of the Spirit—conviction for sin, asserts itself in an unmistakable manner; penitence has its infallible signs; justification is accompanied with its appropriate witness; entire sanctification is not without proof.

One may have a degree of religion, possibly, without a clear and definite witness to himself; but such a

no means common; and where it does occur, the want is not really in the evidence, but in the apprehension of the individual himself. The evidence exists, but he has not a satisfactory appreciation of it. Ordinarily the evidence will be so conclusive, as to leave no doubt, if not at once, after a short time.

Some, indeed, have brighter, firmer views, than others; some experiences are more marked than others; but a genuine experience will not fail to be supported by sufficient proof. The manner and time will not always be manifest; but the fact will be unquestionable.

Religious experience is authenticated to the mind in two modes: First, inwardly, by the witness of the Divine Spirit conjointly with our own spirit. Second, outwardly, by the outward manifestations—the fruits of the life. Where these two modes of evidence are observed, there will be but slight probability of delusion. The great danger, as intimated above, is unfaithfulness in applying the tests. Under most unfortunate teaching many are hurried on to profession, without a careful examination of their state, and, perhaps, in some instances, against their own convictions, with a hope that it will do them good; and having made profession, under the influence of pride of character, and vague hope that it will in some way help them, they are induced to continue it; when they give sad proof to themselves, if they would observe it, and to others, who will not fail to see it, that they are labouring under a mistake.

Let those who make profession of this grace, therefore, and such as may be earnestly seeking for it, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, consider well this subject, and strive for the full measure of proof of their high calling; and when they shall find in their possession the sufficient

evidence, I will not say, let them no longer doubt—they will not; let them, in the joy of their state, witness a good profession before many witnesses; let them "arise and shine, their light being come, and the glory of God having arisen upon them."

Should any, after prayerful examination, find a want of evidence, what then? Shall they continue the profession? shall they commence it? By no means. As they dread the displeasure of God, let them not go beyond the truth. But shall they, therefore, yield to discouragement, and give over the effort? Certainly not. Nothing could be a greater calamity. Let them rather increase their exertions. Rising above all obstructions, gathering courage and resolution from former failures, with their eye steadily fixed upon the mark, let them now, in the strength of God, contend until they prevail. The very difficulties should stimulate the greatness of the prize—nerve us to exertion. And as he who contends for fortune rests not until he knows he has gained, so should not we, until certainty smiles upon success. O that we, writer and readers, may not only perceive what is the witness we want, but also feel and know that we possess it! We will not, we must not rest without it. Our privilege, it is also our supreme happiness.

But we have lingered too long; let us now consider some of the evidences by which one may conclude himself to have attained the grace of holiness.

When sanctification takes place, it will be evidenced directly and indirectly.

I. Directly, by the joint witness of God's "Spirit with our spirits" that the work is done: and where this witness is given, it is conclusive and complete. Other witness is only requisite to assure us that we are not mistaken in supposing

this. When it is certain God's Spirit attests a work, that attestation needs no corroboration. The doctrine of the direct witness of the Holy Spirit conjointly with our spirit needs no vindication here, it is clearly a Bible doctrine. "We know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us." 1 John iii, 24. "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." Rom. viii, 16. "We have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we may know the things that are freely given to us of God." 1 Cor. ii, 12. "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself." 1 John v, 10. "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of love, and of power, and of a sound mind." 2 Tim. i, 7. These passages are sufficient in number, and so obviously appropriate as to authorize the doctrine of the witness of the Spirit to our state in grace.

If you ask us to explain the meaning of the Spirit's witnessing, we might be at a loss to do so. The mode is exceedingly difficult either to understand or conceive; but the thing itself every Christian knows by experience, and upon the authority of God's word. This is sufficient; nothing more can be necessary, however desirable. This much we may say, the method of the Spirit's witness we do not conceive to be by sensible signs: it may be accompanied by such, but is not ordinarily; not by an audible voice; not by a visible manifestation; not by a sensible touch; not anything of this kind; and yet the witness is direct and assured, as much so as though accompanied with outward manifestations. It is a consciousness wrought in the soul, that a change is effected. The soul takes knowledge of itself—of its own state—and so bears witness to the change; the Spirit of God joins with ours, in that manner in which

spirit can impress other spirit, and asserts also the same truth; we are conscious, or by some means assured, that such an impression is made, and made by the Divine Spirit; and though we cannot tell how, yet the soul knows, beyond a doubt, that the impression is from God. Thus God's Spirit, conjointly with ours, attests the change; and in their combined testimony thus rendered, without any external signs, the soul reposes with the consciousness of entire certainty. In the language of one of old, regarding the process, it may be he would say, "I know not;" but respecting the thing, he exclaims, "This one thing I do know, whereas I was blind I now see."

One may be ready to exclaim, "How can these things be?" This is no new question. One of old, and he a ruler in Israel, propounded it to our Saviour, not, indeed, concerning the witness, but concerning the work itself. We borrow our Lord's answer: "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, or whither it goeth." The fact you cannot question, the mode is a mystery. The manner of one spirit's communion with another spirit is shut away from our knowledge: but the fact of such communion is matter of undoubted experience; the mode of the contact unknown, but the thing itself a part of consciousness.

But may one rely upon the witness here indicated? Is there not great probability of mistake? Ask the blind man, whose eyes have been sealed in darkness for a life-time; whose sightless balls have rolled in rayless midnight; who, amid outward things, has groped his cheerless way for half a century, ever wondering what they were, what their appearance, what that vision of which others spoke. Take him out amid the splendours of the star-lit sky, where mil-

lions of resplendent worlds bewilder the gaze; or lead him to the forest, or the mountain, or the river, or the ocean's shore, or to city walks, or rural shades. Suddenly lift the veil. Will he know the change? Open the ears of one born deaf, among the ravishing strains of a cathedral choir; will he know it? Quiet the sufferings of the child of affliction, who has spent sleepless nights of pain; bring glad tidings to the broken heart; pour joy into the bosom filled with sorrow; hush the storm to the tempest-beaten voyager; lift the burden from the shoulders of the fainting. Will he know it? And shall it not be known when the Spirit bears witness with our spirits that we are become children of God? when the heart that was broken is bound up? when the heart that was dead is made alive? when the heart that fainted under the burden of sin, and trembled at the impending wrath of God, is lifted up, and beholds, by faith, a smiling Saviour? If the watcher knows when midnight is past, the sailor when the tempest subsides, surely the soul shall know when morning breaks, and the storm is hushed!

But how shall one discriminate between the witness of the Spirit in justification and entire sanctification? The Spirit is given when we are justified; what more may we expect when we fully attain, when holiness is brought in? This is a plain case. The difference of the Spirit's witness in the work of justification and entire sanctification is not in the manner, so much as the thing which is witnessed *to*. It is given in much the same way; it is the same Spirit; the phenomena are much the same, but the testimony itself differs. When one is justified, the testimony is to precisely that fact; that he is justified, pardoned, made alive to God: but it is not that he is entirely sanctified! The testimony fills him with joy, makes him happy. When he is

entirely sanctified, the same Spirit bears witness again, just as he did before; but now it is to another fact—not that he is justified, but that he is entirely sanctified. This latter witness again makes him happy, as did the former, but in a higher degree, and it is as distinct and certain. And if the former change was known to his own consciousness, so also will this latter be. Thus the Spirit witnesses with our spirits to our religious state, whatever it may be, whether of justification merely, or entire sanctification.

To the above we subjoin the following extracts from Mr. Wesley:—

"1. But what is the 'witness of the Spirit?' The original word, *marturia*, may be rendered either (as it is in several places) *the witness*, or less ambiguously, *the testimony*, or *the record:* so it is rendered in our translation, 1 John v, 11: 'This is the record,' [the testimony, the sum of what God testifies in all his sacred writings,] 'that God hath given unto us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.' The testimony now under consideration is given by the Spirit of God *to* and *with* our spirit. He is the person testifying. What he testifies to us is, 'that we are the children of God.' The immediate result of this testimony is, 'the fruit of the Spirit;' namely, 'love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness.' And without these, the testimony itself cannot continue. For it is inevitably destroyed, not only by the commission of any outward sin, or the omission of any known duty, but by giving way to any inward sin: in a word, by whatever grieves the Holy Spirit of God.

"2. I observed many years ago, 'It is hard to find words in the language of men, to explain the deep things of God. Indeed, there are none that will adequately ex-

press what the Spirit of God works in his children. But perhaps one might say, (desiring any who are taught of God to correct, soften, or strengthen, the expression,) By the *testimony of the Spirit* I mean an inward impression on the soul, whereby the Spirit of God immediately and directly witnesses to my spirit that I am a *child of God;* that *Jesus Christ hath loved me, and given himself for me;* that all my sins are blotted out, and I, even I, am reconciled to God,' or cleansed from all sin, and fully renewed in the image of God.

"3. After twenty years' further consideration, I see no cause to retract any part of this. Neither do I conceive how any of these expressions may be altered, so as to make them more intelligible. I can only add, that if any of the children of God will point out any other expressions, which are more clear, or more agreeable to the word of God, I will readily lay these aside.

"4. Meantime let it be observed: I do not mean hereby, that the Spirit of God testifies this by any outward voice; no, nor always by an inward voice, although he may do this sometimes. Neither do I suppose that he always applies to the heart (though he often may) one or more texts of Scripture. But he so works upon the soul by his immediate influence, and by a strong, though inexplicable, operation, that the stormy wind and troubled waves subside, and there is a sweet calm; the heart resting, as in the arms of Jesus, and the sinner being clearly satisfied that God is reconciled, that all his iniquities are forgiven," and that he is cleansed from all sin.

"5. Now, what is the matter of dispute concerning this? Not, whether there be a witness or testimony of the Spirit; nor, whether the Spirit does testify with our spirit, that we

are the children of God. None can deny this without flatly contradicting the Scriptures, and charging a lie upon the God of truth. Therefore, that there is a testimony of the Spirit, is acknowledged by all parties.

"6. Neither is it questioned, whether there is an indirect *witness* or testimony, that we are the children of God. This is nearly, if not exactly, the same with *the testimony of a good conscience toward God*, and is the result of reason and reflection on what we feel in our own souls. Strictly speaking, it is a conclusion drawn partly from the word of God, and partly from our own experience. The word of God says, Every one who has the fruit of the Spirit is a child of God. Experience, or inward conscience, tells me, that I have the fruit of the Spirit. And hence I rationally conclude, therefore, I am a child of God. This is likewise allowed on all hands, and so is no matter of controversy.

"7. Nor do we assert that there can be any real testimony of the Spirit, without the fruits. We assert, on the contrary, that the fruit of the Spirit immediately springs from this testimony; not always, indeed, in the same degree, even when the testimony is first given. And much less afterward; neither joy nor peace is always at one stay. No, nor love; as neither is the testimony itself always equally strong and clear.

"8. That *the testimony of the Spirit of God* must, in the very nature of things, *be antecedent to the testimony of our own spirit*, may appear from this single consideration; we must be holy in heart and life, before we can be conscious that we are so. But we must love God before we can be holy at all; this being the root of all holiness. Now we cannot love God, till we know he loves us; 'We love him because he first loved us.' And we cannot know his love

to us, till his Spirit witnesses it to our spirit. Till then we cannot believe it. We cannot say, 'The life which I now live, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.'

'Then, only then, we feel
Our interest in his blood,
And cry, with joy unspeakable,
Thou art my Lord, my God.'

"Since, then, the testimony of his Spirit must precede the love of God and all holiness, of consequence it must precede our consciousness thereof.

"9. And here properly comes in, to confirm this Scriptural doctrine, the experience of the children of God; the experience, not of two or three, not of a few, but of a great multitude which no man can number. It has been confirmed, both in this and in all ages, by a *cloud* of living and dying *witnesses*. It is confirmed by *your* experience and *mine*. The Spirit itself bore witness to my spirit, that I was a child of God, gave me an evidence hereof, and I immediately cried, 'Abba, Father!' And this I did (and so did you) before I reflected on, or was conscious of, any fruit of the Spirit. It was from this testimony received, that love, joy, peace, and the whole fruit of the Spirit flowed."

In this connexion, and before we pass to consider the fruits of this state distinctly, we may say a word with respect to the more general spiritual phenomena immediately attending it.

In the moment of sanctification the emotive experience is doubtless various: some are exercised in one way and some in another; some have one class of emotions, some another.

There is diversity of operation both with respect to the Divine and human spirit. We may venture to suggest, however, some things very common attending this state.

(1.) It is, perhaps, generally immediately preceded and accompanied with unusual illumination of mind, imparting clearer and more distinct views of the atonement, the nature of holiness, and the depth of internal corruption. As though a light were suddenly introduced into the soul, it is enabled to discern things which were before entirely concealed; the whole inner man illuminated up, and the powers of the soul seem wonderfully quickened.

(2.) This is associated with a marked increase of faith. The soul, favoured with this glorious illumination, realizes a strength of faith at which itself is astonished, which claims the promises with a certain assurance, and without a waver. The way of faith, which previously seemed indistinct, becomes all radiant and luminous; and its exercise not only easy, but at this point spontaneous. Yea, it no longer limits and fears to embrace the fulness of the promise, but siezes and appropriates it in all its extent.

(3.) Attending this wonderful faith is an immediate assurance wrought, as above described, by the Divine Spirit, and attested by the soul, that sin is all gone and the soul is purified. This assurance amounts to entire certainty in the conviction of the soul enjoying it.

(4.) Then follows, in some instances, great joy and ecstasy: but this, I think, is not the general experience. Ordinarily the soul at this crisis is filled with peace rather than joy; simple peace, tranquillity, a sense of complete satisfaction, attended, in some instances, almost with no impulsive emotion, in others there is great rapture. The expectation of great rapture is common; this not unfrequently leads to difficulty.

It is deemed a change so glorious, that it is generally supposed to be attended with great demonstrations, and high and wonderful manifestations: hence, if mere peace be given, it is liable to leave the mind under some questionings of distrust; if the work is genuine, it soon removes all doubts, and leaves its possessor in undisturbed repose.

(5.) All this is accompanied with a sense of the Divine presence; of communion with God, and intimacy—*oneness*, peculiar to this grace; a feeling that God is all in all; a total abandonment of self and the creature; and a delightful acquiescence in the will of God, and calm repose upon him. I know of no language by which to describe this particular experience. One calls it "rest in God;" another, "fulness of God;" another, "sinking into God;" another, "union with God." I know not what else to denominate it, but a sense of the Divine glory, filling the entire soul; so that the soul finds its complete happiness in him, and neither desires nor consents to anything, but only what is agreeable or supposed to be agreeable to the Divine nature.

And now, the soul being brought into this sense of union and communion with God, its life will be in him, and this will be evidenced further by its fruits.

II. Hence we proceed to state, in the second place, that sanctification is evidenced indirectly by its fruits. "By their fruits ye shall know them," is a good rule; and we might, with great propriety, add, by your fruits ye shall know yourselves. There are certain fruits which flow from sanctification, which must exist where the work itself exists, to assert it; and certain other and counter fruits, which must necessarily exist where it does not, to declare its absence. Now these fruits, if carefully considered, must constitute a most important branch of evidence in the case. By fruits

of sanctification we mean both certain states of experience, and certain products of these states, or, more properly, products of sanctification, with respect to tempers and actions; fruits manifested in the inner man, and fruits exhibited in the outer man. These must severally be examined to bring out all the evidence attesting in the case. And would that an impression could be produced in these connexions, of the importance of the matters now in review and under examination!.

"Q. By what 'fruit of the Spirit' may we 'know that we are of God,' even in the highest sense?

"A. By love, joy, peace, always abiding; by invariable long-suffering, patience, resignation; by gentleness, triumphing over all provocation; by goodness, mildness, sweetness, tenderness of spirit; by fidelity, simplicity, godly sincerity; by meekness, calmness, evenness of spirit; by temperance, not only in food and sleep, but in all things natural and spiritual.

"Q. What are the fruits or properties of this love?

"A. St. Paul informs us at large, love is long-suffering. It suffers all the weaknesses of the children of God, all the wickedness of the children of the world; and that not for a little time only, but as long as God pleases. In all, it sees the hand of God, and willingly submits thereto. Meantime, it is kind. In all, and after all, it suffers; it is soft, mild, tender, benign. 'Love envieth not;' it excludes every kind and degree of envy out of the heart: 'love acteth not rashly,' in a violent, headstrong manner, nor passes any rash or severe judgment: it 'doth not behave itself indecently;' is not rude, does not act out of character: 'seeketh not her own' ease, pleasure, honour, or profit: 'is not provoked;' expels all anger from the heart: 'thinketh no evil;' casteth

out all jealousy, suspiciousness, and readiness to believe evil: 'rejoiceth not in iniquity;' yea, weeps at the sin or folly of its bitterest enemies: 'but rejoiceth in the truth;' in the holiness and happiness of every child of man. 'Love covereth all things,' speaks evil of no man; 'believeth all things' that tend to the advantage of another's character. It 'hopeth all things,' whatever may extenuate the faults which cannot be denied; and it 'endureth all things' which God can permit, or men and devils inflict. This is 'the law of Christ, the perfect law, the law of liberty.'

"And this distinction between the 'law of faith' (or love) and 'the law of works,' is neither a subtle nor an unnecessary distinction. It is plain, easy, and intelligible to any common understanding. And it is absolutely necessary, to prevent a thousand doubts and fears, even in those who do 'walk in love.'"

In regard to certain persons in London, who made profession of this state, Mr. Wesley held the following language, showing what he found wanting in the evidence they furnished of a sanctified state, and so showing what evidence he thought requisite. To this extract we do well to take heed.

"But some who have much love, peace, and joy, yet have not the direct witness; and others who think they have, are, nevertheless, manifestly wanting in the fruit. How many I will not say: perhaps one in ten; perhaps more or fewer. But some are undeniably wanting in long-suffering, Christian resignation. They do not see the hand of God in whatever occurs, and cheerfully embrace it. They do not in everything give thanks, and rejoice evermore. They are not happy; at least, not always happy: for sometimes they complain. They say, this or that is hard!

"Some are wanting in gentleness. They resist evil, instead of turning the other cheek. They do not receive reproach with gentleness; no, nor even reproof. Nay, they are not able to bear contradiction, without the appearance, at least, of resentment. If they are reproved or contradicted, though mildly, they do not take it well; they behave with more distance and reserve than they did before. If they are reproved or contradicted harshly, they answer it with harshness; with a loud voice, or with an angry tone, or in a sharp and surly manner. They speak sharply or roughly when they reprove others; and behave roughly to their inferiors.

"Some are wanting in goodness. They are not kind, mild, sweet, amiable, soft, and loving at all times, in their spirit, in their words, in their look and air, in the whole tenor of their behaviour; and that to all, high and low, rich and poor, without respect of persons; particularly to them that are out of the way, to opposers, and to those of their own household. They do not long, study, endeavour, by every means, to make all about them happy. They can see them uneasy, and not be concerned: perhaps they make them so; and then wipe their mouths and say, 'Why, they deserve it; it is their own fault.'

"Some are wanting in fidelity, a nice regard to truth, simplicity, and godly sincerity. Their love is hardly without dissimulation; something like guile is found in their mouth. To avoid roughness, they lean to the other extreme. They are smooth to an excess, so as scarce to avoid a degree of fawning or of seeming to mean what they do not.

"Some are wanting in meekness, quietness of spirit, composure, evenness of temper. They are up and down; sometimes high, sometimes low: their mind is not well-balanced.

Their affections are either not in due proportion—they have too much of one, too little of another; or they are not duly mixed and tempered together, so as to counterpoise each other. Hence there is often a jar. Their soul is out of tune, and cannot make the true harmony.

"Some are wanting in temperance. They do not steadily use that kind and degree of food which they know, or might know, would most conduce to the health, strength, and vigour of the body: or they are not temperate in sleep; they do not rigorously adhere to what is best for body and mind; otherwise they would constantly go to bed and rise early, and at a fixed hour: or they sup late, which is neither good for body nor soul: or they use neither fasting nor abstinence: or they prefer (which are so many sorts of intemperance) that preaching, reading, or conversation, which gives them transient joy and comfort, before that which brings godly sorrow, or instruction in righteousness. Such joy is not sanctified; it doth not tend to, and terminate in, the crucifixion of the heart. Such faith doth not centre in God, but rather in itself.

"So far all is plain. I believe you have faith, and love, and joy, and peace. Yet you who are particularly concerned know each for yourself, that you are wanting in the respects above mentioned. You are wanting either in long-suffering, gentleness, or goodness; either in fidelity, meekness, or temperance. Let us not, then, on either hand, fight about words. In the thing we clearly agree.

"You have not what I call perfection; if others will call it so, they may. However, hold fast what you have, and earnestly pray for what you have not."

To these lucid suggestions of Mr. Wesley, we will add a few brief reflections, and close this chapter.

Entire sanctification is a state of absolute freedom from sin, properly so called, as above described; it will, therefore, evidence itself by the absence of sin. Any sin, whether of the motive, of the will, of the desire, or of the life, negatives its existence. Here is good and plain ground upon which to test ourselves; and with sincerity and care, we shall be very likely to arrive at the truth. Are your motives pure—your volitions in harmony with the will of God—your desires single—your acts holy, according to your gracious ability—are these things so unitedly? Here, then, is strong proof that you are "set apart." Be careful in your examinations here.

Your tempers. How are they? Do you become impatient under trial; fretful, when chided or crossed; angry, vengeful, when injured; vain, when flattered; proud, when prospered; complaining, when chastised; unbelieving, when seemingly forsaken; unkind, when neglected? Are you subject to discontent, to ambition, to selfishness? Are you worldly; covetous of riches, of vain pomp and parade, of indulgence, of honour, of ease? Are you unfeeling, contemptuous of others, seeking your own, boasters, proud, lovers of your own selves? Beware! These are the sediments of the old nature!

Your duties. How with regard to these? Do you delight in them; are they your pleasure; do they constitute your chief joy? When God evidently calls, do you go willingly, though it be through the furnace; through persecution; through losses, reproaches, sorrows? In the midst of all, is God your joy and rejoicing, and can you say, "The will of the Lord be done"—enduring patiently, and performing joyfully, "as seeing Him who is invisible?" Is your will as God's will? Does he find in you no mur-

muring, no drawing back, no displeasure; but, on the contrary, submission and joy?

Your experience. How upon this point? Have you an unwavering confidence in God? Is your peace of mind full? Have you joy in the Holy Ghost? Do you have free communion with God? Do you realize within a consciousness of purity? Whether, without, there be tempest or calm, sorrow or joy, trial or triumph, do you still, in every case, find a full communion between your soul and the Divine Spirit? By this we do not mean that you are always to be happy, ecstatic; but always to realize union, harmony with God, whether you sorrow or rejoice,—no difference, no feeling of difference, no disunion, no separation. Do you rejoice even in tribulation; and is the life that you live altogether by the faith of the Son of God?

Are you entirely the Lord's? Ponder this question. Look well to it. Have you anything which you do not hold in God? Are you separate from Him at any point? Are you opposed to Him in anything? Are your actions and enjoyments all in unison with Him? Are your influence, your property, your entire position, and your whole life, so far as you can control them, with Him? Are you wholly the Lord's? In your work, in your rest, in your indulgences, in your denials, in your affections, in your volitions, in your associations, in your endeavours; are you always, everywhere, by intention and effort, in union with God?

If, to the above questions, you can with honesty return a favourable answer, then may you conclude that you are one with the Lord, that you are entirely sanctified.

You will be happy. You cannot be otherwise. You are, indeed, in the world. You may be poor, you may be rich; you may be called to suffer, you may have prosperity;

you may mourn over sinners, you may rejoice with saints; you may weep with bereavement, you may joy with the surviving; you may be tempted, you may be preserved; you may be seemingly and actually in all these respects just as other men: but in the midst of it all, you have the proof, you *give* the proof, that you are a child of God—an heir of holiness.

In the world, you live above the world; a man, you bear in your bosom an indwelling God; alive, you are *dead;* and dead, you are *alive!*

Sublime privilege! Glorious state! The life of heaven infused into a soul upon earth! Well may you rejoice, "for great is your reward in heaven;" yea, upon the earth. Even now, you have the foretaste of the feast ineffable; the first-fruits of the glorious harvest of immortal joys. Go forward, witnessing a good profession; shine as lights in the world; glorify your Saviour upon earth, and he will glorify you with the glory He had with the Father, before the worlds were. In sorrow and in joy, let your motto still be, "holiness to the Lord;" ever looking forward to that day when he shall say, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

## CHAPTER VII.

### HOW HOLINESS MAY BE RETAINED, AND REGAINED WHEN LOST.

THE work of good government is but half done when anarchy is reduced to order—when rebel states are subjugated; it remains that such measures be instituted, as to preserve the restored harmony. Without this latter, indeed, the former, though a glorious achievement, may be void of profit.

One seeks fortune. After long and arduous struggles he succeeds. What now? He loses it to-morrow. Its gain was of no advantage to him; his toil was devoid of benefit. One possesses a key by which he may enter into the king's palace. He invests himself in the royal robes. To what purpose? It is but for a minute. He is driven forth again to the adz or shovel!

How may good governments be perpetuated? How may fortune be retained? How may honour and power be preserved? If to gain is desirable, to keep must be even more so.

The case is precisely analogous, with respect to the great boon of which we treat in this work. It is not sufficient that we know how to obtain; it is not sufficient that *we have obtained;* we must know, also, how to keep when we have made the acquisition. The secret of its preservation is not less important than the secret of its possession.

A greater mistake could not be committed, than to suppose that religion, when gained in any of its degrees, will be retained without effort—remain with us, as a thing of

course, without care. Character is eminently mutable—liable to change; and to be perpetuated in one form, requires nurture and vigilance. Surrounded, as all of us necessarily are in this state, with counter currents of influence, all acting upon us ceaselessly, with greater or less force, and, in their degree, having a tendency to leave their impression—to impart their tone and colouring, nothing can be more obvious than the absolute importance of constant attention and activity. These influences need not, indeed, act upon us fatally, but they will act upon us certainly, unless restrained—resisted. A man enters upon the day with unsullied honour; he is tempted; he yields: his honour is in the dust. A Christian goes forth to duty, with a conscience void of offence—with a heart pure: evil presents itself; he is overcome; his purity is marred, his conscience violated. Not a day passes in which there are not some such liabilities. What, under these circumstances, we now particularly inquire, must be done, in order that a sanctified soul may preserve its state and character; that it may be in the evening what it was in the morning; this week, what it was last; this year, what it was the former year? A more interesting practical inquiry could scarcely be started. We will endeavour briefly to answer it.

And we should never, when contemplating the subject of actual salvation, lose sight of the fact, that we are co-workers with God; he works, and we work with him. It is so in the incipient motions, it is so throughout; so in the beginning, so in the progress; so in attaining, and so in maintaining our state. This is so plain as to need no illustration. But the question recurs,—What must we do?

1. We answer, first: we must acquire the habit of constant watching against sin. The tempter is a vigilant and

insidious foe, ever on the alert, ever cunning, and full of artifice. We need to be as wakeful and vigilant. There is no place where he may not approach us, no place so sacred that he will not dare to intrude himself. Even in the privacy of the closet, at the communion, in the sanctuary, when alone, when in society, when musing, when conversing, when preaching, when praying, when praising, when engaged in business, when seeking pleasure, when employed, when idle; he ever lurks near us, and seeks our ruin. He often disguises his true character; sometimes appearing to us as an angel of light, using the honied tones of friendship, professing love, assuming a meek and suppliant air, consulting our good, wearing the mien of disinterestedness, extremely conscientious, employing plausible agents, not unfrequently using our friends, recommending courses not decidedly sinful, proposing compromises, flattering, that we may become vain, persuading, that we may conciliate, raging, that we may yield, and with a thousand other modes, seeking either to surprise, conciliate, or overwhelm us.

Our only safety is in watching against him; guarding, with sleepless vigilance, the sacred precincts of the soul, that, if he enter, he be not entertained; nay, that he be refused an entrance—repulsed at the portal. This will require watching over our thoughts, that they be not idle, empty, vain, improper, on improper subjects, at improper times, in improper measure; over our motives, that they be not sinful, carnal, selfish, worldly; over our affections, that they do not wander, fix on wrong objects, exist in an inordinate degree, seek sinful indulgence or gratification.

Let it not be supposed that this would engross one's entire time—that it is requiring too much. By the grace of God,

and the *instincts*, if I may employ the term, of a sanctified soul,—by which I mean no more than its ready, almost spontaneous effort,—it may be done, and done with ease. This is not our rest: and if holiness be worth possessing, it is worthy of the effort requisite to its attainment and preservation; and such effort is neither impracticable, in any state of circumstances, nor excessive.

2. Would you maintain a sanctified state? Then must there be on your part an absolute refusal to comply with temptation, under any circumstance, to *any degree*. The slightest compliance is death. We would impress this deeply upon your minds. It is a very different thing from the watchfulness advised above. A sentinel may be very watchful, but not faithful: he may see the enemy, but not sound the alarm; nay, may make terms with him. You are not only to watch the approach of sin, but absolutely and totally to resist it! It matters nothing though the temptation be powerful, though the indulgence be venial, you may not yield. You may not parley, if the case is unequivocal. You may not go one step even towards apologizing for rudely repelling the unworthy seducer. Treat him with no tenderness when you repulse him; show no pity. Civility encourages him, and kindness begets intimacy. Let the purpose be firmly inflexible, whatever may be the hazard, that you will not go one step—not even look with a desire, towards the path of the transgressor; "avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it and pass away." This is your only safety, if you would maintain your relation to God—the state of your own soul. If you will compromise, if you cannot consent to exercise such firmness of purpose, you need not calculate upon success; it is out of the question. It may require strength. You will have it.

As your day is, so your grace will be. God will not leave you to struggle alone. If you use what you have, you shall never lack for whatever more may be needful. Remember this. And be not dismayed though your foes gather upon you like the tempest; though their name be legion; though you seem to be helplessness, in their hands. Trust in God, be of good courage: greater is He that is for you, than all they that are against you.

3. Live in the use of all the ordinary and instituted means of grace. Some who, perhaps, were truly sanctified, have committed a deplorable and fatal error upon this point. Finding themselves greatly sustained and strengthened, they have vainly imagined that they need no longer employ the means. Some have been heard to say, that they found no further occasion for prayer, and other helps, that were indispensable in a merely justified state. However sincere such may have been in the outstart of their experience, they have evidently reached a dreadful state of delusion and fanaticism. The means of grace, as instituted of God, are undoubtedly essential to spiritual sustenance when they are practicable,—that is, when within reach. For, to neglect them is a contempt of God's provision, which must induce his displeasure; and it is a direct violation of his plan, which includes the use of means as a duty, and therefore is sinful. No one has a right to make the experiment; and whoever does, will certainly fall into condemnation. Our own inference would be precisely contrary to the one we have just referred to. While a Christian, in proportion as he is advanced, may discern more clearly the nature of means, and so trust less in them, and more in the great agency which they secure, he will, at the same time, be more regular and punctual in their use, honouring them as of Divine appoint-

ment, and deriving profit from them, as aids to communion and growth. We may name as important,—

*Prayer.*—Prayer of all denominations, as occasion may require; but particularly closet prayer, which is only another name for inward looking to God, generally performed in secret places. This, with a sanctified soul, will become a habit, a mode; its breath will be prayer, its looking will be to God! This will be a constant, though it may be, and doubtless will be to some extent, an unconscious exercise, or rather a spontaneous state.

*Meditation.*—To preserve this state much meditation and inward looking is useful—the turning of the eye of the soul upon herself, and towards her experience. Seasons of serious thoughtfulness of this kind are indispensable to spiritual growth, or even to the continuance of spiritual life. In such retired seasons, the soul takes her reckoning, resolves upon her course, and strengthens her resolution for after contests. We are not, indeed, to go out of the world; not to tear away from business; not to abandon our post: but while we are surrounded with the storm and strife of life, we must often withdraw within ourselves, and ask our souls, what is the interior condition? keep not our attention without, so long as to let disorder obtain within.

*Searching the Holy Scriptures,* with an humble, honest, teachable spirit; indeed, if we are sanctified, we will possess no other. This we believe an important means, in proportion as it may be practicable. It will supply the soul with armour, enlarge her powers, provide her for resistance and progress, and strengthen all the elements of her life.

*The Sacrament.*—The holy communion. Perhaps no means will be attended with so great comfort, so much profit. Let it therefore never be neglected, and never idly

or inconsiderately attended to, but with due preparation, and much prayer, and humiliation, and thanksgiving.

*Christian communion,*—or conversation and intercourse with those who enjoy, or are seeking a high spiritual state. This is of great value. It encourages, strengthens, and corrects. Reading religious biography, is of this kind. It is communion with the holy dead, as conversation with the living is communion with them. Holy men of old "spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard them:" so let us do, and the Lord will hear us also, and when he hears, will bless.

4. Consecutive, or rather perpetual consecration. This, to some, may seem to be included in the resolute resistance of every approach of sin, and maintenance of the soul in her integrity. However this may be, it does not do away with the need of the remark we wish to make under this head. Entire consecration, as a means to the attainment of sanctification, has been explained in another connexion; what we wish now to say is, that it is a means, and an indispensable one, of its preservation. It cannot exist a moment in its absence. Hence, let it be remembered, that the consecration which precedes this state is likewise to continue in the same degree after it is gained, for its perpetuation. It is a constant, uninterrupted, and unending consecration; a point carried on into a regular line.

Let it not be inferred that these advices imply so much effort as to be impracticable. It is not so: it requires comparatively no effort, for an honest man always to be honest; a benevolent man, always to be benevolent,—he is so unconsciously. It is so, with respect to this grace, in a measure. The principle implanted will operate with ease; all that we have to do is to be watchful, not so much to keep

it active as to prevent its violent interruption. An unconverted sinner thinks it a very hard thing to be even a tolerable Christian; the Christian does not find it so. He meets with some places of difficulty, much of the time he gets along without conscious effort; yet he must use means all the time. It is so with the higher grace of holiness. The absolute necessity that certain means be in constant requisition, does not imply a distressing effort. A man must use means to live, and use them constantly: but he need not always be in distressing effort; he employs them without such labour. It is so with regard to everything pertaining to character; means are in perpetual requisition.

5. The life of holiness is eminently a life of faith. We have before said, it is attained by faith: we now say it cannot continue a moment without faith; faith is its very root and sap. The same faith which at first introduced the principle, preserves it. But we are not therefore to suppose the soul must always be in painful endeavour. Faith in the heart of a Christian, operates when he does not think of it, produces fruits without his consciousness. It is obvious, that holiness can only co-exist with faith. Would you retain the state? Maintain the vital principle; watch against every tincture of unbelief, every approach of infidelity; let the life you live be by the faith of the Son of God. This will keep you in constant union with God; and thus united you can never fail. Not only realize, "Thou God seest me," but ever see him; keep him constantly before your mind: and so ever recognising him, you will not sin; you will live only in him; he will become "all in all."

6. Acquire the habit of living by the minute. Learn the secret of that wise counsel, when properly understood, "Be careful for nothing." Not that you are to be careless; but

let each minute provide for itself. Let it not be supposed that you are not to act for the future, but act by the minute. Take care of this moment now, while you have it, and the next when it comes; you will not then neglect any. You can live this minute without sin! Is it not so? Do it then. Never mind what is before you. Do not sin now. When each successive minute comes, do likewise. If you will do this, you will not sin at all. Days are made up of minutes: if each one is sinless, the day will be so. Now try this. Nothing is easier, nothing is more wise. Live by the minute. Carry on your business, trade, labour, study, plan for the future; but in all, act for the present, and do not sin now. Trust in God now; do God's will now; do not offend God now. If you will observe this simple rule, you will not fail to succeed. And now, what more need we add? Surely, if these advices be followed, and they certainly are practicable, you will not come short, you will ever prevail. May Heaven prosper you!

It is implied in all these advices, of course, not that your efforts efficiently keep you, but instrumentally: you employ the means, God is the efficiency. He gives you the power to work; and when you work, he co-works with you, and in you. So you "are kept *by* the power of God, *through* faith."

We will append to this chapter a remark upon the subject of regaining this grace, if at any time it should be lost. There is some difference of opinion among Christians as to the extent of lapsing or falling away possible after conversion. We need not say that we are among the number who believe in the possibility of entire apostasy: upon this belief, however, in these connexions, we do not insist. We only avow our belief, that a merely justified Christian may sin against God, and forfeit the grace of justification; and,

further, that a sanctified Christian may lose the grace of sanctification, yea, and also of justification: sanctification includes justification; it may be lost, and justification retained; or both may be lost at one and the same time. This last shade of idea we wish to impress. Not everything that would mar a perfectly holy character would destroy the filial relation of the believer; as that relation subsisted prior to entire sanctification, so it may remain when that state is marred, ceases. Or the loss of entire sanctification may be attended, or immediately followed by acts, which also utterly destroy the earlier and inferior blessing of justification.

Now, in answering the question, How may one who has enjoyed the grace of entire sanctification, and lost it, be restored? it is obvious, reference must be had to the extent of his lapse—the condition into which he has fallen. Much more may be necessary for one than for another—a different kind and amount of effort. One has fallen from the summit of a mountain into a deep gulf at its base; another has just perceptibly declined slightly down its slope: one will need much more to regain the apex than the other.

Has one who was evidently a truly sanctified child of God, fallen entirely away, become seven-fold more the child of the devil than he was before? In addition to the enormity of his sins, has he continued long in this state? How dreadful his condition! One is almost ready to conclude, there is no mercy, no salvation for him; "that to renew him again to repentance is impossible." We would not go so far; yet we think the chances are, he never will be restored. Should he, however, in his abyss of sin, ever awake, and think of returning to his injured and dishonoured Saviour, deep and painful will be his conviction; broken,

indeed, will be his heart; his cry will ascend as from the very belly of hell; and the probabilities are, he will find trouble and sorrow. Not because the Saviour will be less merciful; but because he will find it hard to confide in mercy which has been so much abused. Not because the blood of Jesus will be ineffectual to wash away his sins; but because he will find it difficult to avail himself, by faith, of that blood which has been trampled beneath unhallowed feet. Should one who has fallen so deplorably, chance to read this page, we would speak to him in behalf of his abused Lord; and yet, our words shall be kind. See what you have done! How great is your sin! Look back to other days. Call to mind the goodness of God. Behold yourself now! How sad! But what then? Are you overwhelmed?—filled with shame and sorrow? It is well. Will you return? Will you come back to the arms of your slighted Saviour? Do you say, how can I?—there is no mercy. Say not so. There is mercy, if you have a heart to seek it. Come as first you came. The same Saviour can still save, his blood will still be efficacious. You need to commence again at the beginning, to relay the foundations; but do this, and all will be well. The cup is bitter, but you need to drink it; the path thorny, but you must travel it. It may be your sorrows will be greater than before: you must suffer them. But this one thing remember, and let it sustain you: if you will retrace your steps, if you will make the needful efforts, you may again be happy.

But your case is not that which is described above; the advice does not meet your particular want. You have not entirely forsaken the Saviour. You are still a Christian, in the enjoyment of a good hope, outwardly witnessing a good profession, and inwardly enjoying some of the sacred influ-

ences of the Spirit; but you are not in the high grace of a former experience.

The love of the world in an undue measure, yielding to the force of some temptation, neglect of some duty, want of watchfulness, has laid waste your confidence. You have departed in some degree from God; your thoughts, or your affection, have been given to an improper object, you have preferred your own will to the will of God in some particular, you have let in vanity or sloth, pride or impatience, uncharitableness or selfishness; you have ceased to be entirely the Lord's; guilt has ensued, condemnation is upon you. You feel it; you are unhappy. You do not doubt your relation, but all is not right within. Humble yourself before God, confess your fault, return: wherein you have departed in thought, affection, volition, or deed, at once correct the wrong, and expect God to renew you again. There may be times and circumstances when the confession of your departure to the Church may be necessary. If it has been manifest, it will bring your profession into discredit, and violate your own sense of propriety, should you continue the profession, without an admission of your temporary departure. So soon as you return heartily to God, he will return to you: but it must be a full, hearty, entire return; not a mere desire, not a convulsive effort, not a declaration, not a semi-sincere and half-earnest thing; you must come as first you came, with an entire offering, and God will accept it. If you shall find great difficulty, as perhaps you may,—it is possible even more than at first, for your reproof,—you must overcome, overcome as at first, not in your own strength, but in the strength of God, which will become yours, by the use of the means, with which you are sufficiently acquainted.

And should any who have relapsed from this blessed experience, chance to read these pages, we would say to them, Return; retrace your steps. You cannot, whatever other Christians may do, find rest in an inferior state. You know the more excellent way. Duty calls you with a ten-fold voice: do not turn away, be not overcome with discouragement, let not self-upbraidings hinder you. You now know the cause of your loss; you may succeed better—try again. Privilege invites, duty points the way, your unsatisfied heart urges, the Spirit moves,—do not delay.

Whatever be the extent of your departure, whether of long or short duration, into more grievous or less guilty backslidings; whether you have lost all, or only a part of your religious character—stop now. Go not one step further. Turn at once to your dishonoured Saviour; bring back your heart, guilty as it may be, and become his again. Think not your case is hopeless. It may be deplorable—dreadful. You may have deeply grieved the Spirit, reproached the Redeemer, insulted the Father: still, if you will return, there is no occasion for despair. See how much is involved, and, as you would not risk your undoing, make haste to find what you have unhappily forfeited.

Look before you. It is high time that you awake out of sleep. What you do must be done now. A moment, and it may be too late. O that we might feel how much depends upon immediate and thorough action; how much and earnestly we are called to work now, and to work diligently, seeing that "the night cometh, in which no man can work!"

## CHAPTER VIII.

### HINDERANCES TO THE ATTAINMENT AND RETAINMENT.

WHY is not this high and desirable experience generally attained by Christians? This is a point worthy of more extended consideration than can be bestowed upon it in this connexion; yet here we may venture to suggest a few reasons. The two cardinal reasons were hinted at in the introductory chapter to this work; "a failure clearly to apprehend privilege, and consequent insensibility to obligation." But these causes of neglect and immaturity arise out of others, and produce, in their turn, a complication of other and inferior hinderances. The reason why Christians generally are not sanctified, is not because it is not their privilege; is not because they have sought for this great blessing earnestly, and have failed to attain; is not because of the insufficiency of ordinary means to bring them to its possession; not because they do not need it; not because God does not will it; not because the blood of Jesus was not shed for it; not because the Holy Spirit is not able to effect it; not because duty does not require: none of these. It is not because Christians do not, on the whole, prefer holiness; not because they would not wish to be delivered from sin; not because they are entirely without efforts in this direction. Most Christians, perhaps there are no exceptions, do have hours of deep and earnest solicitude, and crying to God; do mourn over their short comings, and have habitual aspirations, and longings after a higher state—a state faintly apprehended, and fitfully sought after. But they do not succeed, in a majority of instances, until near

the close of life, perhaps in the very struggle of death, for many painful reasons, among which we may name particularly the following.

There is an obvious reason why this experience is not ordinarily attained at the same time that regenerating grace is; namely, the mind of the penitent is not turned to it distinctly at all, perhaps not one in a thousand ever think of it at that time. Their whole effort is directed to the gain of pardon and reconciliation. For this they pray and weep, and mourn. The cry of their heart is, "God be merciful to me a sinner," "Save, or I perish." Their faith is kept upon this one object. Allowing, therefore, entire sanctification to be a distinct work, as we do, and allowing that its condition is faith, it is no marvel that it is not obtained synchronically with pardon. It was not asked for, it was not believed for; it was not, of course, bestowed.

Ordinarily, perhaps we might say almost universally, the mind of the returning prodigal is engrossed with his outward actual sins, not so much with his inward corruptions. It is for this reason, presumably, that he realizes more the urgency of pardon than cleansing, the desire of forgiveness rather than the need of entire purity.

When, in answer to his earnest repentings, and prayers, and faith, he obtains pardon, and the Spirit of adoption, whereby he cries, Abba, Father, he is completely happy; more he might hardly be able to contain. The love of sin, and its motions, for the present, being dead, he has no trouble; his soul rests in perfect peace; his enemies that are not cast out are concealed, and he does not even know their existence, certainly the dread of them does not disturb him. Time passes on, temptation comes, and now he feels an inward motion—the uprising of some unholy temper.

This first motion to evil is followed by others of the same kind; and the young convert awakes to the fact, that there are lurking enemies within him, seeking to bring him again into captivity. He finds that he was pardoned, that his heart was changed, that he loves God, and is enabled to trust in him; but also, he finds that his nature is not entirely sanctified. The discovery of these inward motions to sin distresses him. He knows that it is not right to harbour them, and now begins the struggle after their extirpation, more or less earnest, as privilege is more or less discerned.

But hinderances arise! and alas, but too generally, hinderances which long keep the enemy in possession of the heart, so as to disturb its peace, and divide its empire, if not entirely to recapture it.

The first hinderance we shall name, is that of defective and unsound teaching, and, consequent upon this, confused and incoherent views; as expressed in another connexion, privilege is not apprehended, duty is not enforced. There is not sufficient plainness and simplicity in the teaching of the pulpit. The doctrine is too much taken from its connexions, and presented in such a manner as to intimidate and confuse, rather than enlighten and encourage. The subject is mystified, and made to assume the character of the marvellous and impracticable; whereas it should be placed before Christians in simple earnestness, as a part of their common privileges and calling. Many are made to believe that some sin is absolutely necessary, that entire deliverance is impossible; these, of course, reconcile themselves to their lot: others are taught that entire freedom is possible, yet such is the distortion of the doctrine, that they have no heart to seek earnestly for the experience. Thus, through improper and erroneous instruction, multitudes are

hindered from the rest of perfect love. It ought not to be so.

Without startling them with it as a far-fetched novelty, as a thing to be speculated about, it should be kept before them in connexion with other doctrines and duties, as the great point to which they are constantly to aim, expecting and desiring its attainment momentarily, in the use of the means, and then its enjoyment, not by novel and fanatical professions, but by a regular and holy life. Let it be insisted upon in simple, honest earnestness.

2. A great hinderance has arisen to the progress of this work, from the manifest extravagancies and inconsistencies of some who make profession of it,—extravagancies more in language than conduct, evincing ignorance, pride, and presumption; and inconsistencies of life and temper, convicting them either of hypocrisy or delusion. These causes have done much to disgust and injure honest and sincere minds, occasioning them to look upon the whole subject either with doubt or fear. It is mainly with reference to this point, that in another part of this book we have cautioned those enjoying this high state, with regard to its profession, both as to manner and time, urging them to spare no pains in the matter of living it every moment, that their lives may take the place of their tongues, and witness for them. Those who have really entered into this higher life will appreciate what is here said; whilst many who have entertained unexpressed longings after it, will respond to the sentiment, from painful experience of its truth. The odium which has arisen from the causes above alluded to, and for which some who profess this state are mainly responsible, has done much to prevent the Church from striving for it, as they would have done.

Identifying the doctrine and experience of holiness with the imperfections and improprieties alluded to above, and attaching, as a consequence, a kind of odium to the profession, many have turned away from the whole subject with a strong distaste, if not absolute disgust. This is not excusable. We do not apologize for it. But it is so, and not unnatural that it should be.

What are called schools have been formed, a certain class of Christians have abstracted themselves from their brethren, and this has brought them and their profession into discredit. I must believe it has greatly, though I am convinced not intentionally, injured this work of God. Their influence among their brethren is impaired, and what of good is in them is lost. Christians are all one family; and though some have attained to more grace, to deeper experience than others, the family circle should not be sundered, and extraordinary behaviour does not well become even a favourite child, unless it should be an extraordinary humility, modesty, and self-abasement.

An unnatural and distorted state of things has ensued. The doctrine has been taken to a considerable extent away from the pulpit, and put under the keeping of private Christians. The pulpit has been in many places overshadowed by private instruction; and not unfrequently ignorant and incompetent persons, and what is worse, in some instances presumptuous men and women, have assumed to guide the Church, by the light of their incoherent professions, and irregular experience and practice. It is not matter of wonder that evils have grown up and gained prevalence under such circumstances. The pulpit may have been unfaithful and incompetent; but most certainly there is but little promise in transferring the subject to private, and not

always more competent, teachers. Let the pulpit experience and teach this glorious privilege as a common part of their mission, and as it deserves to be taught, and great evil will be obviated.

Let these hinderances be removed, and others, of which there are many, rooting in them and growing up under their shade, will disappear. Beholding the glorious nature of holiness in its own loveliness, seeing it as their present privilege and duty, and feeling its importance, the Church will move forward into a wider place, to a more elevated position; the strong ones helping forward the weak, and the whole mutually working, to the edification of the body of Christ: "In whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord; in whom ye also are builded together, for a habitation of God through the Spirit."

Let us arise, brethren, and go forth to the higher grounds, the more elevated retreats. There is more for us; let us not hesitate, let us not be hindered. The obstructions in the way may be overcome, must be overcome. Will we claim our privilege? Our Lord and Master calls us, he points the way; let us follow. O that we might receive grace to "press towards the mark for the prize of our high calling of God in Christ Jesus!"

Particularly, let all those that enjoy this blessed experience, be careful that they do not hinder its progress in others. Use diligence, that you be not blamed; and with that powerful faith, and quenchless zeal, and fervent love, and *sublime* humility, which you possess, urge the Church forward by an example infinitely more efficient than words: and Zion will come forth as the morning, and, even more terrible than an army with banners, will go forth to the conquest of the globe! Heaven speed the day!

But having thus candidly admitted a great hinderance as originating with those who profess this grace, we must, with equal candour and no less pain, record another and more fatal hinderance, coming from the ranks of Christians making no such profession. Some of these, having become prejudiced against the doctrines, and particularly against the profession, from the causes above alluded to, have indulged in a spirit and strictures both discreditable to themselves and injurious to others; in some cases bestowing upon the whole subject sneers and contemptuous epithets, and so grieving the Spirit of grace, and discouraging and absolutely intimidating those who would seek and enjoy its blessed experience. Let such Christians tremble at their position, and look forward with fear to their approaching recompense. Most certainly, however the fanatical and deluded, as such are pleased to denominate all those who profess the grace of holiness, may have injured the cause, these are not inferior to them, in the ruin and havoc they are working.

But the great hinderance is in ourselves: we are not willing, we will not consent. We are understood now to speak of Christians generally. Many Christians seem desirous to get along with as little religion as possible, just so they may not forfeit their hope; others have higher aims, they wish to be exemplary, and will not be satisfied without the comforting influence of the Spirit: but the number is comparatively small, who honestly desire, and earnestly endeavour after, entire consecration—after all the mind that was in Christ. Satan has been dethroned; Christ reigns. This is well. But Christ does not reign without a rival. This is not well. Self assumes a part of the government; and while we would not for any consideration allow Satan to

divide the sovereignty with Christ, we most earnestly contend to divide it ourselves. What a fatal mistake! How much of loss and unhappiness it causes to ourselves! how much of good it prevents with regard to others! We must have a little of our own will, with regard to our property, our time, our indulgences; we must spare some of our lusts, not quite put them to death; we cannot quite consent that the Lord should be all in all; in most things he may govern, but in some minor things, to be sure, we must have it our way. Here is the great cause why we do not become wholly the Lord's—we cannot quite crucify self.

In concluding these reflections, we would repeat again: if we are not entirely sanctified, it is not because it is impracticable; it is not because it is not required; it is not because we are not urged to it by the highest conceivable motives: none of these, but because we will not consent, that grace should have the complete triumph over sin. And may I not, dear reader, call upon you to think of it in this light? Do not allow yourself to suppose, that because you are not entirely the Lord's, you ought not to be.

Remember, however great the hinderances, they are not insurmountable, and therefore constitute no excuse. You are required to overcome them. Will you continue delinquent? I beg of you to reflect seriously before you come to such a decision. Consider what is required of you, ponder well your responsibility; and with your eye upon the present, and your mind upon the future, act nobly your part. Contend for the mastery. Other hinderances than those named, may appear; doubtless this will be so. But what then? Shall they prevail? Duty is plain. Privilege is manifest. A thousand voices urge you forward.

An Omnipotent hand is at your command. Go forward. The greater the hinderance, the greater the triumph, and the more glorious the reward. Be animated to effort, and may you prevail! Remember in whom is your strength, and doubt not.

## CHAPTER IX.

### MOTIVES TO HOLINESS.

A FEW observations in the opening chapter upon the importance of the subject, indicate some of the motives which, in connexion with a few others, we propose now more fully to unfold.

We do not forget that we are addressing our instructions to Christian readers; but few others, it is presumed, will be sufficiently interested to give our subject a serious attention The considerations we shall offer, therefore, will be such as are supposed to be suitable to affect Christians particularly. Others may not feel them at all. Christians will not fail to feel them deeply, pungently; the more pungently, in proportion as they are interested in the great work of personal salvation, and the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom among their fellow men. We are so constituted, that though we may act against the strongest possible motives, yet we generally act under the influence of motive: well were it for us if we always, or even generally, acted from the stronger or better motive.

Motives to holiness. Where shall we not go to find them? What direction shall we take to elude them? Are they not everywhere? Do they not come down from the heavens, and spring up from the earth? Do we not feel them within, and behold them without us? Is there anything that has a voice that does not preach it? Nay, do not even mute and dumb things urge it, with silent but persuasive eloquence? What is heaven, but an eternal monument of its glory? What is hell, but a terrible and endless

declaration of its necessity? The happiness of the former and the anguish of the latter, equally impress it upon the hearts of thoughtless mortals. Indeed, turn where we will, whether to time or eternity, to the throne or the abyss, a million arguments commend it to us, a million voices urge it upon us.

If the constitution of the universe and the history of Providence unite, to impress a single great lesson upon mankind, it is that which is considered in these pages—the beauty and utility of holiness; if they combine to constitute one great motive, it is a motive to holiness. But for the deep-seated perversity of our fallen nature, nothing more would be requisite; the sermon of a ceaselessly-preaching universe would prove effectual; Providence would not teach in vain. The voices that come from above and beneath, from within and without, as from the grave and the judgment, from heaven and hell, and from all regions, and from all beings, admonishing us in solemn language, "Be ye holy," would sink deep into our hearts. Alas for us that it is not so! We have no ear for such tremendous, such awfully solemn discourses; we turn away: the great sermon proceeds; we heed it not. God preaches in all nature, in all providence; we hear him not. Death, and judgment, and eternity, and heaven, and hell, prolong the discourse; but we close our ears against them. Our own hearts take up the theme, and every throb enforces it; but we smother the voice, and will not hearken.

But, reader, turning away from these general reflections, let us invite your attention to a few, a very few, of the motives we desire particularly to bring to your consideration.

1. What ought to be an irresistible motive to holiness is

found in its own essential nature, its intrinsic excellence and glory.

Are single virtues, separate and alone, worthy of love—entitled to the homage of our hearts, as fidelity, charity, filial affection? Do we yield to these an involuntary admiration wherever found? How much more shall we esteem the constellation of all the virtues in a single heart! If we pause to contemplate with delight a solitary grace, blooming alone amid a desert waste, with what greater delight shall we behold an oasis, where all the graces bloom in perfection of beauty together, shedding their blending fragrance over one lovely spirit!

What would you not give if that spirit were yours? If it might be purchased, would worlds, were they in your possession, be too great a price? You attach value to wealth, beauty, learning, good name, happiness. It is well. These are all desirable; but how less than dust in the balance are they, compared with conscious, inviolable virtue! Would you not prefer to be the hero of a single virtue, rather than conqueror of the world?—a martyred Paul, shining in radiant vestments, rather than a bloody Alexander, dazzling with the splendours of conquest? Why do you attach the idea of beauty and glory to angels? Is it not because they are holy,—because they love with a perfect love, adore with a perfect adoration, and glow with a perfect fervour? If they sing sweetly, is it not because they feel purely? Is it not holiness which spreads joy over all the celestial regions? which causes the gush and rapture of the skies? which kindles the lustre and awakens the song of heaven? which suffuses the very spirit of Jehovah with his ineffable glory, and the spirits of all his holy worshippers with inexpressible and everlasting bliss? Surely,

if this be so, we are correct, when we assume that there is, in the very nature of holiness, an infinite motive to its gain. Rubies are not so precious, and nothing that can be desired can be compared unto it.

Holiness always begets happiness. Would you possess the one?—you must not fail to gain the other. How great was your bliss, when you heard the voice of pardon, when you felt the upspringing of purity within! How the tumult of your heart was hushed into calm; and fear, and sorrow, and remorse, gave place to quietness and assurance! Can you ever forget it? But this was only a prelude—a foretaste of that deeper, sweeter, ever-increasing joy of the heart all filled with God. Would you possess your soul in peace? Would you bear in your bosom a constant heaven? It is for you. Take in the up-welling fountain, you shall have the stream. Here, Christian, is the panacea, the cure for all your griefs, for all sins. Take holiness into your bosoms, and grief, and sorrow, and sin, will flee from them. You will find rest—a rest, O how sweet, how deep, how lasting! The heavenly guest stands beseeching admittance. Why will you not give him a cordial welcome? Receive him, and with him you receive all things.

2. But if holiness is urged upon us from a consideration of its own intrinsic excellence, much more is it, from the fact that God requires it. Let us pause here, for one moment, and take in the impression of this truth. God not only prefers that we, his creatures, should be holy, but he requires it; his authority commands it. Who ever resisted his command and prospered? Reader, know you that God is now speaking to you? Will you hearken? What does he say? Hear him, and ponder: "Be ye holy, for I the Lord your God am holy." Is this God's speech? What

does it require of you? Do not, at your peril, hasten away. Do not treat it with contempt. Remember who it is that speaketh. What will you say to Him? He commands you to be holy. What will you answer Him? You must answer. Will you refuse? Look well to your position. Go forward; let your mind take in what surrounds and what lies before you. Think, think earnestly. Let your decision be reached in the presence and under the eye of God. If you will refuse him, know that he is with you. He is not far away; his hand touches you, his eye is full upon you. He waits your answer. Will not your love for him, your veneration for his authority, prevail? Christian, I trust here is a motive you will not resist. If you love God, if you love your own soul, surely you cannot. O that you may see clearly and feel deeply the danger of refusing Him that speaketh from heaven; and may you also see that a requirement is upon you, which may not be delayed! Your decision is demanded now. Do not procrastinate; do not hesitate; do not, above all, at your peril, refuse.

3. The interest of your Master's cause requires it; and the common glory of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. How can we glorify God fully without entire consecration and conformity? Will not every manifest, nay, even every secret defect, mar and sully the cause and honour of our Redeemer? We are his witnesses, called to be the lights of the world: "If the light that is in us be darkness, how great is that darkness!" Men will take knowledge of us, and thence draw their conclusions; the consequences will not terminate with ourselves, they will reach forward to the vitals of the cause. Why will you not think of this? Do you love the Saviour? How then can

you put Him to an open shame? When you look out upon the profane and thoughtless, "who despise, and wonder, and perish;" when you see their heartless neglect, and contempt of One that died for them, how your hearts bleed. But shall you also injure Him, and that, too, in the house of his friends? shall you cause those dear wounds to bleed afresh? Do you love souls, and mourn in secret places, because they crowd along down to the pit? What would you not do to save one from death? Would anything be too great? Would you not, if it were the only means, labour for a lifetime, with ceaseless watchings and prayers? I know you would. But how many are going down to the pit because of your unfaithfulness; how many it may be are stumbling over you into destruction? You do not think of this. But will you remain thoughtless? Reflect. Who are these, so deeply, but unintentionally injured, through your unfaithfulness? Not strangers; not transient acquaintances alone. This were bad enough. But look. Among that ruined number are members of your own family; your own sons and daughters, children for whom you travailed! What would you not have done for them? You give yourself to watching, and toil, and tears, on their account, but still *your* unfaithfulness helped to undo them. O, brethren! The influence of our example acts in two directions, equally urging us to entire faithfulness; the glory of God in the one, and the salvation of those we most deeply love in the other. How impressively are we called to wake up and stir ourselves, where so much is at stake!

The lives of Christians, at last, practical exponents as they are of the principles and spirit of our religion, are among the great agencies for the conversion and sanctification of the world. Books and sermons may be resisted;

even tears and entreaties may be despised: but the silent and unostentatious influence of holy lives will speak a language to the heart it cannot easily gainsay, a language which will sound on when we sleep in the dust. The dim tracery of words will be washed away and effaced from memory; but the deep lines of a beautiful example, chiselled into the heart, will remain forever.

It is holiness, not the profession of it, that will give us influence both with God and men; winging our prayers with faith, and our counsels with power, deriving power from above, and sending out from us currents of power through the earth. "God in us, the hope of glory," shining out in the even and resplendent beauty of a holy life, will give us, unperceived it may be, and unknown to ourselves, an influence which will draw many after us, to brighten in our crown of rejoicing forever. "They that are wise shall shine as the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever." We may, indeed, turn many to righteousness, by wise and earnest words; but infinitely greater will be their efficiency, if followed up by the sanction and influence of a life, known and read of all, as corresponding with our profession. Wise words, enforced by holy examples, are like "apples of gold in pictures of silver," charming with their beauty, and winning by their value.

But especially we derive motives to a higher life, and more entire consecration, from the circumstances which surround us.

Never, since the beginning, as we believe, was there a more interesting, a more important period, than the present moment. Contemplated in any aspect, it is pregnant and portentous; a grand culminating point is undoubtedly at

proximating; never, therefore, did the Christian Church need to be so wide awake, so much alive, as now. Like a majestic vessel riding into harbour under the pressure of a fierce storm, the world seems nearing the port of destiny; she needs now, if ever, experienced and adroit hands to bring her safely and speedily to the mooring. The great harvest is ripe, waving with world-wide expanse. Sturdy reapers are wanted. The materials are gathered, the temple rising up out of the midst of them—builders are in demand.

The Church is not ready to meet the demands of the times. And her want is in a vital point, it is radical—at the heart. Not that she is more deficient now than formerly. This we do not believe. We are not of those who say, "Why were the former days better than these days." The Church of Christ, if we judge correctly, was never more vital than at the present moment; but her demands have increased more rapidly than her piety. Extraordinary times demand extraordinary means. Napoleon overran and subjugated Europe with his veteran legions; but they stood still before Wellington, they were not ready for the crisis at Waterloo.

The Church of the present, compared with the Church of former centuries, even in her palmiest periods, makes one's heart to leap up within him: her light, her missionary zeal, her soundness in the faith, her enlightened enterprise, her real piety, all fill us with hope. But after all, there is a want growing out of the present crisis—a want which nothing outward can supply, which Bible societies, missionary phalanxes, universities, and even a martyr's devotion and zeal will not make up,—it is the want of that higher life which the Church may have, nay, which she must have, before the consummation of her mission; that deep and

entire consecration to God of her means, that yielding up of her whole heart, that quenchless love, that unabating, concentric, and universal effort for the salvation of souls; that *abandon* of self, and recognition of the doctrine of stewardship, which will lead us to live for God, and for the race; that loving God, with all our heart, and our neighbour as ourselves. That, brethren, is what we want, what the Church must have, for the great crisis which rushes upon her. Soon—it is but little in the advance—every family on the globe will have the Bible, will read it in the mother tongue; every neighbourhood will have a minister, and church, and Sabbath school; missionary societies will cease, for there will be no dark corners unsupplied; the sound of the Sabbath bell will echo round the globe; superstition will give way, and the temples of idolatry will cease; light will invest the earth! Glorious prospect! It tarries but a pace. But what then? Do you not see that something more is needed? The people will not all be converted, the mission of Christianity will not be finished. There will remain the same work to be done for the whole world, which now remains to be done in nominally Christian countries, in those most Christianized countries now on the globe—Great Britain and the United States. The full and undimmed splendours of Christianity will still remain to be developed—her complete influence and power, her superior blessings; and this can only be realized by a more thorough baptism of the Church with the Spirit of Jesus. She must ascend to the higher, and until now the more unfrequented, retreats of religious experience. She must acquire that accretion of power, that force and efficiency, which can arise only from a deeper experience and improved practice. Nominal, or even ordinary, but true, piety will not answer.

Now is the time, when every soldier of Jesus should be at his post, should be a full man, should have on the whole armour, should do valiant battle for the Lord. See how God has honoured us—what a breach he has given us to fill! O that we may feel our mission, and rise up and gird ourselves to honour it! Now the world wants men, full-grown Christian men, not babes or dwarfs. The man who will dignify his position at this crisis, or even hereafter, must be worthy of it. If you would do anything, men of God; if you would not be ciphers in the glorious strife; if you would not die without issue, prepare for the portentous day in which God has seen fit to give you existence. Behold your work! Behold your privilege! Do not come short, be animated to duty: and may God make of us such a people, as, in his providence, the wants of the age and race require! See, what a work is before us! It hastens. We need to be up, in earnest. Everything now is in earnest. The universe is in earnest. Quick time is the watchword. What we do must be done quickly: a moment, and the opportunity rushes past us; a moment, and we are gone; a step, and the grave contains us. If we would make impression for God, for man, we must strike now. O that we could awake and see and feel the mighty verities thronging around us, and display for once that noble and glorious spirit which becomes sons and daughters of the Most High! Every thing else will perish. Our fortunes, our heroic deeds, our distinctions—these will all sink down to be remembered no more; what we do here, and in this cause, will live forever; the waves we create here will roll on in widening circles through eternity.

And let us look away for a moment into that glorious eternity; is there no motive here? How evanescent and

transient are all things beneath the sun! How like a vanishing shadow, "the fading glories disappear, the short-lived beauties die away!" Nothing abideth in one stay. "Our fathers, where are they? The prophets, do they live forever?" Behold, what a fleeting, transient thing is earth! Soon we shall leave it all. But what then? Is this all? Is there nothing beyond? No life beyond the grave? No home for the soul, when the frail tenement of earth decays? Shall we sleep in the grave forever? You do not think so. You would not think so for the universe. The body dies—the soul lives on. Ages roll their lengthened periods round—it blooms still. Behold! Look forward. Explore the future. Learn hence the value of that great boon, "without which no one can see God." You may live without holiness here—you cannot hereafter. Would you see the value of holiness, linger here. Concentrate your thoughts. Pursue the upward destiny of a soul brightening under the smile of God forever, see its ever-increasing and unfolding beauty, hear the ravishing melody of its triumphant song. A thousand ages are fled. Behold the augmented and ever expanding glory, ascending, widening its circle, becoming more and more like God, and losing itself ever in his ineffable radiance. Such is the destiny of a soul washed in the blood of Jesus. Behold, on the other hand, a soul darkening under the frown of Jehovah. Ages fly away: its darkness broods darker still, its sorrow gathers down in denser folds: it is lost. The lengthened periods of eternity roll by, but they bring no redemption; deep, dark, dismal gloom, settles down around its sphere forever. Learn by the contrast the value of holiness. Its presence is life—its absence is eternal death. Could you pursue this contrast through eternity, could you have but a faint glimpse of the reality,

you would no longer rest, but fly in trembling haste to a Saviour's wounds for shelter and for life.

To these impressive motives many others, equally forcible, might be added; and these might be greatly and profitably elaborated, so as to increase their weight and influence: but this will be left to your own minds. We wish you to ponder them, and seek to feel their force. Retire alone, take the Word of God, bend your knees in humble prayer, think of a coming judgment, have eternity full before you, and then ask yourself the simple question, Ought I to be holy? You will have an answer, an answer fraught with a thousand motives. Only follow it, and all will be well. Let nothing hinder you; let God prevail.

In dismissing this subject, I feel an inexpressible solicitude. I look into the future, and ask, What will be the result? Soon writer and reader will disappear from earth. The hand that traced these lines will be cold in the grave, and your eyes that now trace them will be sealed in death. How will it be with us? A million ages will pass,—how will it be with us then?

## CHAPTER X.

### ADVICE TO CHRISTIANS PROFESSING THIS HIGH ATTAINMENT.

CHRISTIANS often need to be admonished; not always the less, because of the greatness of their attainments. Admiting, as we do, that no degree of religious progress precludes mental imperfection and infirmity, even the most mature Christians may need counsel and advice; and, whether they need it or not, they will, in proportion to their humility and self-distrust, thankfully receive it, when given with a good intent, and in a proper manner.

It is believed that you are sincere in your profession, and that you well understand your state. You are not fanatics, not enthusiasts, not pretenders. You are God's sanctified children. Your faith has claimed, and your hearts embraced, the promises fully. You know the power of God, and are "made partakers of the Divine nature." "You live, yet not you, it is Christ that liveth in you; and the life you live is a life of faith in the Son of God." But you are yet in the world; your warfare is not finished, your work not done. There are duties, trials, sufferings, responsibilities, and privileges still before you, more, and greater, it may be, than if you stood in a greatly inferior lot. The strongest and best-armed battalion are usually stationed in the most exposed and dangerous part of the fight. You ought to know, and doubtless do, that many eyes are upon you; that your position is a shining one; that you are "compassed about with a great cloud of witnesses,"—witnesses thronging the earth, ascending from the pit, and clustering from the skies, gazing upon you with

very different feelings, but with a common interest. How much depends upon your action! How important that you stand nobly to your post! You will need much grace, much heroism, more than the martyr's firmness. If you fall, or even waver—you are a standard-bearer—great will be the sensation. If you stand firm, great will be your recompense in that day.

Having found the invaluable prize of holiness, nothing is so desirable to you as its extension among your fellow-men. For this you live; for this you labour, and toil, and pray; "watching for it, as they that watch for the morning." Great is your responsibility in these connexions, great your *peril*. It will be well to keep this before your minds, and lay it away in your hearts; and, for your assistance in your great emergency, the following advices of Mr. Wesley, that truly great and good man, will be of service to you.

"Q. What is the first advice* that you would give them?

"A. Watch and pray continually against pride. If God has cast it out, see that it enter no more: it is full as dangerous as desire. And you may slide back into it unawares; especially if you think there is no danger of it. 'Nay, but I ascribe all I have to God.' So you may, and be proud nevertheless. For it is pride, not only to ascribe anything we have to ourselves, but to think we have what we really have not. Mr. L., for instance, ascribed all the light he had to God, and so far he was humble; but then he thought he had more light than any man living, and this was palpable pride. So you ascribe all the knowledge you have to God; and in this respect you are humble. But if you think you have more than you really have, or if you think you are so taught of God, as no longer to need

man's teaching, pride lieth at the door. Yes, you have need to be taught, not only by Mr. Morgan, by one another, by Mr. Maxfield, or me, but by the weakest preacher in London; yea, by all men. For God sendeth by whom he will send.

"Do not therefore say to any who would advise or reprove you, 'You are blind; you cannot teach me.' Do not say, 'This is your wisdom, your carnal reason," but calmly weigh the thing before God.

"Always remember, much grace does not imply much light. These do not always go together. As there may be much light where there is but little love, so there may be much love where there is little light. The heart has more heat than the eye; yet it cannot see. And God has wisely tempered the members of the body together, that none may say to another, 'I have no need of thee.'

"To imagine none can teach you, but those who are themselves saved from sin, is a very great and dangerous mistake. Give not place to it for a moment; it would lead you into a thousand other mistakes, and that irrecoverably. No; dominion is not founded in grace, as the madmen of the last age talked. Obey and regard 'them that are over you in the Lord,' and do not think you know better than they. Know their place and your own; always remembering, much love does not imply much light.

"The not observing this has led some into many mistakes, and into the appearance, at least, of pride. O beware of the appearance and the thing! Let there 'be in you that lowly mind which was in Christ Jesus.' And 'be ye likewise clothed with humility.' Let it not only fill, but cover you all over. Let modesty and self-diffidence appear in all your words and actions. Let all you speak and do

show that you are little, and base, and mean, and vile in your own eyes.

"As one instance of this, be always ready to own any fault you have been in. If you have at any time thought, spoken, or acted wrong, be not backward to acknowledge it. Never dream that this will hurt the cause of God; no, it will farther it. Be therefore open and frank when you are taxed with anything; do not seek either to evade or disguise it; but let it appear just as it is, and you will thereby not hinder, but adorn the Gospel.

"Q. What is the second advice which you would give them?

"A. Beware of that daughter of pride, enthusiasm. O keep at the utmost distance from it! Give no place to a heated imagination. Do not hastily ascribe things to God. Do not easily suppose dreams, voices, impressions, visions, or revelations, to be from God. They may be from him. They may be from nature. They may be from the devil. Therefore, 'Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they be of God.' Try all things by the written word, and let all bow down before it. You are in danger of enthusiasm every hour, if you depart ever so little from Scripture; yea, or from the plain, literal meaning of any text, taken in connexion with the context. And so you are, if you despise or lightly esteem reason, knowledge, or human learning; every one of which is an excellent gift of God, and may serve the noblest purposes.

"I advise you never to use the words wisdom, reason, or knowledge, by way of reproach. On the contrary, pray that you yourself may abound in them more and more. If you mean worldly wisdom, useless knowledge, false reasoning, say so; and throw away the chaff, but not the wheat.

"One general inlet to enthusiasm is, expecting the end without the means; the expecting knowledge, for instance, without searching the Scriptures and consulting the children of God; the expecting spiritual strength without constant prayer and steady watchfulness; the expecting any blessing without hearing the word of God at every opportunity.

"Some have been ignorant of this device of Satan. They have left off searching the Scriptures. They said, 'God writes all the Scriptures on my heart. Therefore I have no need to read it.' Others thought they had not so much need of hearing, and so grew slack in attending the morning preaching. O take warning, you who are concerned herein! You have listened to the voice of a stranger. Fly back to Christ, and keep in the good old way, which was 'once delivered to the saints;' the way that even a heathen bore testimony of: 'That the Christians rose early every day to sing hymns to Christ as God.'

"The very desire of 'growing in grace' may sometimes be an inlet of enthusiasm. As it continually leads us to seek new grace, it may lead us unawares to seek something else new, beside new degrees of love to God and man. So it has led some to seek and fancy they had received gifts of a new kind, after a new heart, as, 1. The loving God with all our mind: 2. With all our soul: 3. With all our strength: 4. Oneness with God: 5. Oneness with Christ: 6. Having our life hid with Christ in God: 7. Being dead with Christ: 8. Rising with him: 9. The sitting with him in heavenly places: 10. The being taken up into his throne: 11. The being in the New Jerusalem: 12. The seeing the tabernacle of God come down among men: 13. The being dead to all works: 14. The not being liable to death, pain, or grief, or temptation.

"One ground of many of these mistakes is the taking every fresh, strong application of any of these Scriptures to the heart, to be a gift of a new kind; not knowing that several of these Scriptures are not fulfilled yet; that most of the others are fulfilled when we are justified; the rest the moment we are sanctified. It remains only to experience them in higher degrees. This is all we have to expect.

"Another ground of these and a thousand mistakes, is, the not considering deeply that love is the highest gift of God—humble, gentle, patient love; that all visions, revelations, manifestations whatever, are little things compared to love; and that all the gifts above mentioned are either the same with, or infinitely inferior to it.

"It were well you should be thoroughly sensible of this,—the heaven of heavens is love. There is nothing higher in religion; there is, in effect, nothing else; if you look for anything but more love, you are looking wide of the mark, you are getting out of the royal way. And when you are asking others, 'Have you received this or that blessing?' if you mean anything but more love, you mean wrong; you are leading them out of the way, and putting them upon a false scent. Settle it then in your heart, that from the moment God has saved you from all sin, you are to aim at nothing more, but more of that love described in the thirteenth of the Corinthians. You can go no higher than this, till you are carried into Abraham's bosom.

"I say yet again, beware of enthusiasm. Such is, the imagining you have the gift of prophesying, or of discerning of spirits, which I do not believe one of you has; no, nor ever had yet. Beware of judging people to be either right or wrong by your own feelings. This is no Scriptural way of judging. O keep close to 'the law and to the testimony!'

"Q. What is the third?

"A. Beware of Antinomianism; 'making void the law,' or any part of it, 'through faith.' Enthusiasm naturally leads to this; indeed, they can scarce be separated. This may steal upon you in a thousand forms, so that you cannot be too watchful against it. Take heed of everything, whether in principle or practice, which has any tendency thereto. Even that great truth, that 'Christ is the end of the law,' may betray us into it, if we do not consider that he has adopted every point of the moral law, and grafted it into the law of love. Beware of thinking, 'Because I am filled with love, I need not have so much holiness. Because I pray always, therefore I need no set time for private prayer. Because I watch always, therefore I need no particular self-examination.' Let us 'magnify the law,' the whole written word, 'and make it honourable.' Let this be our voice: 'I prize thy commandments above gold or precious stones. O what love have I unto thy law! all the day long is my study in it.' I entreat you, beware of bigotry. Let not your love or beneficence be confined to Methodists, so called, only; much less to that very small part of them who seem to be renewed in love; or to those who believe yours and their report. O make not this your Shibboleth! Beware of stillness; ceasing in a wrong sense from your own works. To mention one instance out of many: 'You have received,' says one, 'a great blessing. But you began to talk of it, and to do this and that; so you lost it. You should have been still.'

"Beware of self-indulgence; yea, and making a virtue of it, laughing at self-denial, and taking up the cross daily, at fasting or abstinence. Beware of censoriousness; thinking or calling them that any ways oppose you, whether in judg-

ment or practice, blind, dead, fallen, or 'enemies to the work.' Once more, beware of Solifidianism; crying nothing but 'Believe, believe!' and condemning those as ignorant or legal who speak in a more Scriptural way. At certain seasons, indeed, it may be right to treat of nothing but repentance, or merely of faith, or altogether of holiness; but, in general, our call is to declare the whole counsel of God, and to prophesy according to the analogy of faith. The written word treats of the whole and every particular branch of righteousness, descending to its minutest branches; as to be sober, courteous, diligent, patient, to honour all men. So, likewise, the Holy Spirit works the same in our hearts, not merely creating desires after holiness in general, but strongly inclining us to every particular grace, leading us to every individual part of 'whatsoever is lovely.' And this with the greatest propriety: for as 'by works faith is made perfect,' so the completing or destroying the work of faith, and enjoying the favour or suffering the displeasure of God, greatly depends on every single act of obedience or disobedience.

"Q. What is the fourth?

"A. Beware of sins of omission; lose no opportunity of doing good in any kind. Be zealous of good works; willingly omit no work, either of piety or mercy. Do all the good you possibly can to the bodies and souls of men. Particularly, 'thou shalt in any wise reprove thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him.' Be active. Give no place to indolence or sloth; give no occasion to say, 'Ye are idle, ye are idle.' Many will say so still; but let your whole spirit and behaviour refute the slander. Be always employed; lose no shred of time; gather up the fragments, that nothing be lost. And whatsoever thy hand findeth to

do, do it with thy might. Be 'slow to speak,' and wary in speaking. 'In a multitude of words there wanteth not sin.' Do not talk much; neither long at a time. Few can converse profitably above an hour. Keep at the utmost distance from pious chitchat, from religious gossiping.

"Q. What is the fifth?

"A. Be patterns to all of denying yourselves, and taking up your cross daily. Let them see that you make no account of any pleasure which does not bring you nearer to God, nor regard any pain which does; that you simply aim at pleasing him, whether by doing or suffering; that the constant language of your heart, with regard to pleasure or pain, honour or dishonour, riches or poverty, is,

'All 's alike to me, so I
In my Lord may live and die!'

"Q. What is the sixth?

"A. Beware of schism, of making a rent in the Church of Christ. That inward disunion, the members ceasing to have a reciprocal love 'one for another,' (1 Cor. xii, 25,) is the very root of all contention, and every outward separation. Beware of everything tending thereto. Beware of a dividing spirit; shun whatever has the least aspect that way. Therefore, say not, 'I am of Paul or of Apollos;' the very thing which occasioned the schism at Corinth. Say not, 'This is my preacher; the best preacher in England. Give me him, and take all the rest.' All this tends to breed or foment division, to disunite those whom God hath joined. Do not despise or run down any preacher; do not exalt any one above the rest, lest you hurt both him and the cause of God. On the other hand, do not bear hard upon any by reason of some incoherency

or inaccuracy of expression; no, nor for some mistakes, were they really such.

"Likewise, if you would avoid schism, observe every rule of the society. Never omit meeting your class; never absent yourself from any public meeting. These are the very sinews of our society, and whatever weakens, or tends to weaken, our regard for these, or our exactness in attending them, strikes at the very root of our community. As one saith, 'That part of our economy, the private weekly meetings for prayer, examination, and particular exhortation, has been the greatest means of deepening and confirming every blessing that was received by the word preached, and of diffusing it to others, who could not attend the public ministry; whereas, without this religious connexion and intercourse, the most ardent attempts, by mere preaching, have proved of no lasting use.'

"Suffer not one thought of separating from your brethren, whether their opinions agree with yours or not. Do not dream that any man sins in not believing you, in not taking your word; or that this or that opinion is essential to the work, and both must stand or fall together. Beware of impatience of contradiction. Do not condemn or think hardly of those who cannot see just as you see, or who judge it their duty to contradict you, whether in a great thing or a small. I fear some of us have thought hardly of others merely because they contradicted what we affirmed. All this tends to division; and, by everything of this kind, we are teaching them an evil lesson against ourselves.

"O beware of touchiness, of testiness,—not bearing to be spoken to; starting at the least word; and flying from those who do not implicitly receive mine or another's sayings!

"Expect contradiction and opposition, together with crosses of various kinds. Consider the words of St. Paul: 'To you it is given, in the behalf of Christ,'—for his sake, as a fruit of his death and intercession for you,—'not only to believe, but also to suffer for his sake,' Phil. i, 29. *It is given!* God gives you this opposition or reproach; it is a fresh token of his love. And will you disown the Giver; or spurn his gift, and count it a misfortune? Will you not rather say, 'Father, the hour is come that thou shouldest be glorified: now thou givest thy child to suffer something for thee: do with me according to thy will?' Know that these things, far from being hinderances to the work of God, or to your soul, unless by your own fault, are not only unavoidable in the course of providence, but profitable, yea, necessary for you. Therefore receive them from God (not from chance) with willingness, with thankfulness. Receive them from men with humility, meekness, yieldingness, gentleness, sweetness. Why should not even your outward appearance and manner be soft? Remember the character of Lady Cutts: 'It was said of the Roman Emperor Titus, never any one came displeased from him. But it might be said of her, never any one went displeased to her: so secure were all of the kind and favourable reception which they would meet with from her.'

"Beware of tempting others to separate from you. Give no offence which can possibly be avoided; see that your practice be in all things suitable to your profession, adorning the doctrine of God our Saviour. Be particularly careful in speaking of yourself: you may not, indeed, deny the work of God; but speak of it, when you are called thereto, in the most inoffensive manner possible. Avoid all magnificent, pompous words; indeed, you need give it no general

name; neither perfection, sanctification, the second blessing, nor the having attained. Rather speak of the particulars which God has wrought for you. You may say, 'At such a time I felt a change which I am not able to express; and since that time I have not felt pride, or self-will, or anger, or unbelief; nor anything but a fulness of love to God and to all mankind.' And answer any other plain question that is asked, with modesty and simplicity.

"And if any of you should at any time fall from what you now are, if you should again feel pride or unbelief, or any temper from which you are now delivered; do not deny, do not hide, do not disguise it at all, at the peril of your soul. At all events go to one in whom you can confide, and speak just what you feel. God will enable him to speak a word in season, which shall be health to your soul. And surely he will again lift up your head, and cause the bones that have been broken to rejoice.

"Q. What is the last advice that you would give them?

"A. Be exemplary in all things; particularly in outward things, (as in dress,) in little things, in the laying out of your money, (avoiding every needless expense,) in deep, steady seriousness, and in the solidity and usefulness of all your conversation. So shall you be 'a light shining in a dark place.' So shall you daily 'grow in grace,' till 'an entrance be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ.'

"Most of the preceding advices are strongly enforced in the following reflections; which I recommend to your deep and frequent consideration, next to the Holy Scriptures:—

"1. The sea is an excellent figure of the fulness of God, and that of the blessed Spirit. For as the rivers all return into the sea, so the bodies, the souls, and the good works

of the righteous, return into God, to live there in his eternal repose.

"Although all the graces of God depend on his mere bounty, yet is he pleased generally to attach them to the prayers, the instructions, and the holiness of those with whom we are. By strong though invisible attractions he draws some souls through their intercourse with others.

"The sympathies formed by grace far surpass those formed by nature.

"The truly devout show that passions as naturally flow from true as from false love: so deeply sensible are they of the goods and evils of those whom they love for God's sake. But this can only be comprehended by those who understand the language of love.

"The bottom of the soul may be in repose, even while we are in many outward troubles; just as the bottom of the sea is calm while the surface is strongly agitated.

"The best helps to growth in grace are the ill usage, the affronts, and the losses which befall us. We should receive them with all thankfulness, as preferable to all others, were it only on this account,—that our will has no part therein.

"The readiest way to escape from our sufferings is, to be willing they should endure as long as God pleases.

"If we suffer persecution and affliction in a right manner, we attain a higher measure of conformity to Christ, by a due improvement of one of these occasions, than we could have done merely by imitating his mercy, in abundance of good works.

"One of the greatest evidences of God's love to those that love him is, to send them afflictions, with grace to bear them.

"Even in the greatest afflictions, we ought to testify to

God, that, in receiving them from his hand, we feel pleasure in the midst of the pain, from being afflicted by Him who loves us, and whom we love.

"The readiest way which God takes to draw a man to himself is, to afflict him in that he loves most, and with good reason; and to cause this affliction to arise from some good action done with a single eye; because nothing can more clearly show him the emptiness of what is most lovely and desirable in the world.

"2. True resignation consists in a thorough conformity to the whole will of God; who wills and does all (excepting sin) which comes to pass in the world. In order to this we have only to embrace all events, good and bad, as his will.

"In the greatest afflictions which can befall the just, either from heaven or earth, they remain immovable in peace, and perfectly submissive to God, by an inward, loving regard to him, uniting in one all the powers of their souls.

"We ought quietly to suffer whatever befalls us, to bear the defects of others and our own, to confess them to God in secret prayer, or with groans which cannot be uttered; but never to speak a sharp or peevish word, nor to murmur or repine; but thoroughly willing that God should treat you in the manner that pleases him. We are his lambs, and therefore ought to be ready to suffer, even to the death, without complaining.

"We are to bear with those we cannot amend, and to be content with offering them to God. This is true resignation. And since he has borne our infirmities, we may well bear those of each other for his sake.

"To abandon all, to strip one's self of all, in order to

seek and to follow Jesus Christ naked to Bethlehem, where he was born; naked to the hall where he was scourged; and naked to Calvary, where he died on the cross, is so great a mercy, that neither the thing, nor the knowledge of it, is given to any, but through faith in the Son of God.

"3. There is no love of God without patience, and no patience without lowliness and sweetness of spirit.

"Humility and patience are the surest proofs of the increase of love.

"Humility alone unites patience with love; without which it is impossible to draw profit from suffering; or, indeed, to avoid complaint, especially when we think we have given no occasion for what men make us suffer.

"True humility is a kind of self-annihilation; and this is the centre of all virtues.

"A soul returned to God ought to be attentive to everything which is said to him, on the head of salvation, with a desire to profit thereby.

"Of the sins which God has pardoned, let nothing remain but a deeper humility in the heart, and a stricter regulation in our words, in our actions, and in our sufferings.

"4. The bearing men, and suffering evils in meekness and silence, is the sum of a Christian life.

"God is the first object of our love: its next office is, to bear the defects of others. And we should begin the practice of this amid our own household.

"We should chiefly exercise our love toward them who most shock either our way of thinking, or our temper, or our knowledge, or the desire we have that others should be as virtuous as we wish to be ourselves.

"5. God hardly gives his Spirit even to those whom he

has established in grace, if they do not pray for it on all occasions, not only once, but many times.

"God does nothing but in answer to prayer: and even they who have been converted to God without praying for it themselves, (which is exceeding rare,) were not without the prayers of others. Every new victory which a soul gains is the effect of a new prayer.

"On every occasion of uneasiness we should retire to prayer, that we may give place to the grace and light of God, and then form our resolutions, without being in any pain about what success they may have.

"In the greatest temptations, a single look to Christ, and the barely pronouncing his name, suffices to overcome the wicked one, so it be done with confidence and calmness of spirit.

"God's command to 'pray without ceasing,' is founded on the necessity we have of his grace to preserve the life of God in the soul, which can no more subsist one moment without it, than the body can without air.

"Whether we think of, or speak to, God, whether we act or suffer for him, all is prayer, when we have no other object than his love and the desire of pleasing him.

"All that a Christian does, even in eating and sleeping, is prayer, when it is done in simplicity, according to the order of God, without either adding to or diminishing from it by his own choice.

"Prayer continues in the desire of the heart, though the understanding be employed on outward things.

"In souls filled with love, the desire to please God is a continual prayer.

"As the furious hate which the devil bears us is termed the roaring of a lion, so our vehement love may be termed crying after God.

"God only requires of his adult children that their hearts be truly purified, and that they offer him continually the wishes and vows that naturally spring from perfect love. For these desires, being the genuine fruits of love, are the most perfect prayers that can spring from it.

"6. It is scarce conceivable how strait the way is wherein God leads them that follow him; and how dependant on him we must be, unless we are wanting in our faithfulness to him.

"It is hardly credible of how great consequence before God the smallest things are; and what great inconveniences sometimes follow those which appear to be light faults.

"As a very little dust will disorder a clock, and the least sand will obscure our sight, so the least grain of sin which is upon the heart will hinder its right motion toward God.

"We ought to be in the Church as the saints are in heaven, and in the house as the holiest men are in the Church; doing our work in the house as we pray in the Church; worshipping God from the ground of the heart.

"We should be continually labouring to cut off all the useless things that surround us; and God usually retrenches the superfluities of our souls in the same proportion as we do those of our bodies.

"The best means of resisting the devil is to destroy whatever of the world remains in us, in order to raise for God, upon its ruins, a building all of love. Then shall we begin, in this fleeting life, to love God as we shall love him in eternity.

"We scarce conceive how easy it is to rob God of his due, in our friendship with the most virtuous persons, until they are torn from us by death. But if this loss produce

lasting sorrow, that is a clear proof that we had before two treasures, between which we divided our heart.

"7. If, after having renounced all, we do not watch incessantly, and beseech God to accompany our vigilance with his, we shall be again entangled and overcome.

"As the most dangerous winds may enter little openings, so the devil never enters more dangerously than by little, unobserved incidents, which seem to be nothing, yet insensibly open the heart to great temptations.

"It is good to renew ourselves from time to time, by closely examining the state of our souls, as if we had never done it before; for nothing tends more to the full assurance of faith, than to keep ourselves by this means in humility, and the exercise of all good works.

"To continual watchfulness and prayer ought to be added continual employment. For grace flies a vacuum as well as nature; and the devil fills whatever God does not fill.

"There is no faithfulness like that which ought to be between a guide of souls and the person directed by him. They ought continually to regard each other in God, and closely to examine themselves, whether all their thoughts are pure, and all their words directed with Christian discretion. Other affairs are only the things of men; but these are peculiarly the things of God.

"8. The words of St. Paul, 'No man can call Jesus Lord, but by the Holy Ghost,' show us the necessity of eying God in our good works, and even in our minutest thoughts; knowing that none are pleasing to him but those which he forms in us and with us. From hence we learn that we cannot serve him, unless he use our tongue, hands, and heart, to do by himself and his Spirit whatever he would have us to do.

"If we were not utterly impotent, our good works would be our own property; whereas now they belong wholly to God, because they proceed from him and his grace: while raising our works, and making them all divine, he honours himself in us through them.

"One of the principal rules of religion is, to lose no occasion of serving God. And since he is invisible to our eyes, we are to serve him in our neighbour; which he receives as if done to himself in person, standing visibly before us.

"God does not love men that are inconstant, nor good works that are intermitted. Nothing is pleasing to him, but what has a resemblance of his own immutability.

"A constant attention to the work which God intrusts us with, is a mark of solid piety."

These advices of Mr. Wesley are so important, that we cannot too highly commend them to your attention. They are quite as applicable now as when they were first published. How wonderful was the illumination, how profound the spiritual discernment of this great, good man!

In addition to the above, we wish to call your attention to some other points of great moment.

Would you retain the high state to which, in the unspeakable mercy and goodness of God you have been lifted, and would you cause others to see, and take knowledge of you, that you have been with Jesus, to feel the power and influence of your piety—would you spread abroad the savour of this grace—what shall you do? Dwell long and prayerfully upon this question—you cannot be better employed. Beware of deception!

Do not attach too much importance to profession: here is one point where you are likely to be misled, hence the

greater need of caution. Mr. Wesley and Mr. Fletcher found it necessary to advise a discreet and cautious, a well-timed profession, in their day; the admonition is certainly quite as much needed now. There may be times when, if you live in this grace, it will be well and profitable to declare it; but there will be other times, when you should not introduce it. Let your life generally declare for you; and when the circumstances seem to demand spoken testimony, be careful that it be not overwrought, that it be free from ostentation, that it be in great humility and self-abasement. Do not fall into the delusion, that profession should be confidently and often made. Depend upon it, it will savour more of pride than grace; it will influence backward more than forward. You are tempted that it is for the glory of God. I very much doubt whether this is not sometimes a snare. This advice is particularly urged, unless your life is such as to admit of no question either of your sincerity or correctness. Do not, at your peril, if in your family, or business, or in any of the walks of life, or if in your inward tempers, you find ground for suspicion of yourself,—do not imagine to repair this suspicion, by the boldness of your profession. This is nothing short of deception; it cannot help you, but must involve you in deeper condemnation. Always remember your numerous, and it may be great, frailties, and know that men see them, and take account of them. Humility becomes you, and disarms them. Be careful, therefore, to exalt the grace of God, by abasing yourself; and yet, do not dishonour the grace of God, by pleading it as an apology for your sins. This is intended for your good; and if your state corresponds with your profession, you will not resent it. There is one consideration which will bear weight with you: allowing that

boldness would answer for you, it certainly would not answer for all. Yet the very ones who ought to be silent will be most likely to imitate you. It would, therefore, be better for you to give no countenance to their imprudent and injurious rashness, by observing the utmost prudence in the manner of your own witnessing. Upon this subject Mr. Wesley holds the following language:—

"Q. Suppose one had attained to this, would you advise him to speak of it?

"A. At first, perhaps, he would scarce be able to refrain, the fire would be so hot within him; his desire to declare the loving-kindness of the Lord carrying him away like a torrent. But afterward he might; and then it would be advisable not to speak of it to them that know not God; (it is most likely it would only provoke them to contradict and blaspheme;) nor to others, without some particular reason, without some good in view. And then he should have especial care to avoid all appearance of boasting; to speak with the deepest humility and reverence, giving all the glory to God."

Do not be over anxious to believe that you are sanctified, you will know it when it comes; or if, indeed, you should not have the clear witness, it is better to possess it without knowing, than to believe you have it when you have it not. But are you ready to say, Must I not have faith before I have the witness? And we answer, Yes. But be not misled here. It is not faith to believe you are sanctified: for if love and faith precede the work, then your faith would be false; and this false faith would be the condition of the great work of holiness. Be not, therefore, over anxious to believe you are sanctified. Rather wait in earnest prayer and trusting in God until you have a clear witness. Do not

refuse to believe when there is evidence to justify faith, but neither hasten to believe in advance of the evidence. Never forget that the faith which saves, in none of its stages, has regard to yourself, but to God. It is not to believe that you are justified, or sanctified, but to trust in God for the blessing you desire. How most ruinous is that instruction which turns the eye of the inquirer away from God to himself, teaching him to believe something with regard to himself, rather than to cling alone to God! It may distress you for a time to be without the witness you desire, but it is a small matter compared with the work itself; hence, be much more concerned about the latter than the former.

Do not depreciate the blessing of justification. Great wrong has been unwittingly done by unadvised opinions and expressions, on the part of those who profess a higher state of grace, with regard to justifying grace, in ordinary Christian experience. This is, and always must be, fruitful of several injurious results. It savours of pride, it provokes unkind feeling, it is obviously erroneous.

Justification is represented as an unsafe state, as but little better, if any, than impenitency; and Christians not actually in the enjoyment of, or earnestly seeking after, a higher state of grace, are considered but little more secure than the men of the world.

Justifying grace is a great blessing, it cannot be too highly prized. A justified soul cannot be lost, if it do not fall; it has a title to heaven—no power can deprive it of its inheritance. In this it is no less secure than the sanctified soul. It does not, indeed, enjoy all that it might and should enjoy here; but still it is not without high and glorious blessings. But will the merely justified get to heaven without sanctifica-

tion? By no means; but they will be sanctified. They are God's children; they cannot, if they do not forfeit the relation, fail of the inheritance. Holiness is a privilege, as such let it always be taught. But that justification will bring its possessor to heaven is no less a truth, and it must never be surrendered.

And we subjoin here this other remark: many Christians who make no pretensions to a higher state than that of ordinary Christian experience, do certainly live in a manner, and evince such deep and earnest piety, as to make them compare favourably, nay, I may say with advantage, with most of those who claim, and it may be justly, to have made higher attainments: it becomes us, therefore, to be cautious how we pass condemnation upon them.

A word of counsel to those who do not profess to have attained. If you are a Christian, you feel the need of entire conformity to the will of God in all things; you would not intentionally injure or hinder, but would in every way promote this great work, both in yourself and others. This is your feeling, we know; but it may be you are, nevertheless, under influences which lead you astray. Have you not allowed yourself to become indifferent to the great work of holiness, or, it may be, even prejudiced against it? Do you not sometimes speak of it in an unbecoming manner? I have sometimes heard even ministers say, with a sneer, of some erring, or it may be not erring Christian, he is a sanctified one! How such conduct must grieve the Spirit of God! How unbecoming a disciple of Christ—still, how much more uncomely in a minister who believes and preaches this glorious doctrine! As you love God, and would not grieve his Spirit; as you love the Church, and would not let down or bring contempt on the simplicity and purity of religion, be

cautious how you feel and speak in this connexion. Be not a shame to yourselves, in thus setting the seal of hypocrisy on your own profession. Rather forgetting the things which are behind, press forward to the mark of your high calling of God in Christ Jesus. O rest not until you attain to this glorious experience; if others who profess it come short of living it, and so fill you with sorrow and almost impatience, do you obtain it, and live it before them, and cause your silent example, and not your indifference, to be their reproof. And I beg of you to remember to what you are called; and as you love God and hope for his smiles, do not permit yourself to come short.

You may pass along with some comfort and good hope, and with some progress, but be not satisfied until you attain fully. Anything short of holiness is not the end of your faith.

As peculiarly suited to encourage young Christians, we close this treatise with a beautiful extract from that entertaining work, Wise's Path of Life. It will scarcely be read without profit—without awakening new and more earnest longings after a higher life.

"The blessed Jesus said, 'I WILL GIVE YOU REST.' But the fluctuating, changeful, mournful experience of most professing believers is anything but *rest*—it is often labour, pain, and sorrow.

"Why is this? Must it be so? Is it unavoidable? These queries the young convert cannot avoid putting to his own heart, and in reference to his own experience. It is well to do so. But it is important to solve them correctly.

"The truth is, that there is not the least necessity for a sad and lamentable experience in any child of God.

Divine commands, Divine promises, Scripture examples, and numerous living witnesses, incontestably prove it to be God's will that the disciple should be holy in heart and in life.

"The enjoyment of *holiness* is sweet indeed. None but the 'pure in heart' know what the word 'REST' implies. Here is a statement from one who had spent several years in suffering the unrest of an unsanctified believer, and who, having subsequently attained and enjoyed the blessing of holiness for four years, gave this testimony. 'The prevailing state of my mind has been in no wise that of high emotions. On the contrary, there has been *great calmness, placidity, and quiet of mind;* a freedom from excitement, or agitation of feeling. I have often thought that *peace* was the peculiar, the special state of mind belonging to Christ's disciples, as he said, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you."'

"How desirable a state is this! 'Great calmness, placidity, and quiet of mind,' during a period of four years! What soul on earth, beside the sanctified one, can produce such an experience? What can the most aspiring heart desire more?

"Why do not all Christians gain this blessed state—this sublime serenity of mind? And why especially do not the sincere and humble, who really desire it, enter into this sweet state?

"The reason why multitudes of Church members are not holy is because they do not seek to be so. They are worldly, vain, or idle. They are loungers and slumberers in the vineyard of Jesus Christ. It will be a miracle if, when the bridegroom appears, *they* are not numbered with the sleeping virgins.

"But it is not so with all. Many desire a higher and better experience, They read, pray, resolve, weep, struggle, and after all, make little progress in the way of holiness. Why is this?

"One chief reason is, that such seekers too often labour to mend their religious characters instead of aiming at the purification of their hearts; or, to express myself differently, they aim at the purification of their hearts by improving their characters, by striving to subdue particular sins. Let me give you an example, to illustrate my meaning.

"I was once very intimate with a young man whom I will name Joseph. Shortly after his conversion, he was introduced to a poor sister, whose employment was washing and ironing. But though she was poor in circumstances, she was rich in faith; she was a living example of the power of Jesus Christ to cleanse the heart from all sin; and she soon drew the attention of my friend Joseph to the subject of Christian holiness. He was sincere and earnest, and therefore received her counsels with profit. After one or two interviews, he seriously engaged in an effort to obtain complete sanctification.

"His attention was first directed to a discovery of the principal defects in his character. He saw himself strongly inclined to pride, to impetuosity of temper, to envy, and to covetousness. Over these sinful inclinations he mourned and prayed. He resolved to overcome them.

"'I will not yield to pride,' he said to himself. That same evening he was requested to pray in a social meeting. He had great liberty of expression. 'How eloquently I prayed to-night! The brethren will think me to be very pious and talented,' was his inward thought as he closed his prayer. He yielded to the suggestion, and indulged in

very self-complacent feelings. 'Is not this pride?' his conscience at length whispered. Poor Joseph! His spirits sunk, and he went home dejected.

"Confessing his sin, he renewed his resolutions. The next day some one said to him:—

"'Joseph, do you know how you offended Mr. C— last night?'

"'No! How?'

"'Why, in your prayer?'

"'How did my prayer offend him?'

"'He says you displayed a vain, pompous spirit, and that it will not be safe to put you forward too fast.'

"Joseph coloured and replied, 'I think the old man had better mind his own business. He don't like young men, and I don't mean to care anything about him.' These last words were spoken with an evidently excited temper. Poor Joseph! Then he again recollected himself; he felt subdued and conquered. 'Alas! alas! I never shall be holy,' was his inward exclamation.

"These struggles with inward evils and characteristic sins, were continued and renewed. Indeed they formed the history of his experience for several months. He made but small progress in his endeavours to check the growth of sinful feeling, and, at last, sunk down to a level with the ordinary professor, making scarcely an effort after a pure heart.

"Why did Joseph fail of success? He was sincere, earnest, and willing to be purified. Yet it is not wonderful that he failed. It would have been wonderful if he had succeeded. His efforts were misdirected. The following incidents will serve to explain his mistake.

"Near to a village in Europe there was once a large

morass. Its stagnant waters created a fatal malaria. The atmosphere, burdened with the exhalations of the morass, poisoned the people. It became a serious question whether they should forsake their homes or drain the morass. After due deliberation they resolved to do the latter.

"Drains were cut to conduct the waters away, but the labours of the day were neutralized during the night. What was drawn off by the drain, was replenished from some secret source; and, after prodigious labours, the morass was still undrained—the malaria remained.

"At last they conceived the very obvious idea that some spring supplied the morass. If that could be discovered and its waters drawn off by a fitting channel, then the morass would become dry. Happy thought! The spring was found, the channel formed, and the unhealthy morass was converted into fertile fields and lovely gardens.

"Now does the reader understand the cause of Joseph's failure? He was like these villagers. They aimed at destroying an effect while the cause remained. So did Joseph. He tried to remove pride, temper, and the like, from his character, while the carnal heart, from which these evils sprung, remained. He did not succeed. Of course he *could* not. He could not help doing and feeling as he did, while his heart was unsanctified. Like the spring, it kept sending out its corrupt streams, and he could not prevent their overflow upon his life. Had he taken his *heart* to the fountain opened in Jerusalem, and submitted it to the sanctifying influence of the blood of Christ, his defects of character would have disappeared with the corruption of his heart.

"Here, then, is an important truth to be written on the

young convert's mind. All defects of character originate in the heart. All your pride, your vanity, your evil tempers, your covetousness, and your various other failings, proceed from the undestroyed carnality of the heart, as the Saviour said: '*Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies.*'

"The influence of the heart on the character is strikingly shown in the following fact. 'Some winters ago two friends were travelling in Lapland. To protect themselves against the extreme rigour of the season, they had enveloped themselves in thick foldings of garments, and were well wrapped in fur. Notwithstanding all these precautions the cold was almost insufferable. In the course of their journey through one of the glens of that country, they perceived the body of a man nearly covered with snow. When they reached him, he appeared frost-bitten and dead. What was to be done. They were both enfeebled by the frost, breathing an atmosphere of snow and shivering with the cold. One of the travellers proposed, that as they could do the frost-bitten man no good, they should leave him and make the best of their way to the distant inn. The other felt the spark of compassionate benevolence kindling in his breast, and began the work of restoring animation, while his companion shivered and shuddered on to the distant village. His efforts were at first very feeble, but as he persevered he became warm. His benevolent labour was crowned with success, animation was restored, and a man was saved from death.

"Here may be seen two men with *hearts* of an opposite kind—one selfish, the other benevolent. The selfish heart was willing the poor traveller should die in the snow;

the benevolent heart was not willing he should so perish. Hence the difference in their conduct. The one passed on, the other stopped and saved a life.

"Holiness, therefore, is to be sought for in the heart. That must be made right, and the life, the character will, of necessity, be right also.

"But how is that purity of heart to be gained? Does not the young convert wish to know? O! is he not in a flame of desire to be the possessor of a holy heart? If so, I will endeavour to point out the royal road—the way cast up for the redeemed.

"The first thing necessary to entire sanctification is a *willingness to be sanctified.* This implies a fixed decision to be entirely the Lord's—to consecrate the whole soul, with the body, to the service of Almighty God. The seeker after a full salvation, must bring *himself,* without the least reserve, and dedicate the offering forever to the work and service of Jehovah.

"This consecration made, nothing more is required but simple faith in Jesus Christ. This faith comprehends an undoubting belief in the entire willingness of God to sanctify, according to his promise, and also an unshrinking confidence that he does accept and purify in the instant that the act of self-consecration is performed. Not, indeed, because of that act, but because he has promised to do so for the sake of Jesus Christ; the act of self-consecration being nothing more than placing ourselves on the spot where God has promised to meet us. It has no merit; it does not procure the sanctifying Spirit. No; it is only the proper posture of a spirit waiting to receive a free gift, at the hands of a Divine Sovereign. The *blood of Jesus,* and that alone, is the meritorious cause—the all-vic[illegible]

our heavenly Father to put his sanctifying Spirit into the believer's heart. Upon that blood, therefore, must the convert depend, when asking for a holy heart.

"Come then, my young reader, and devote yourself in this glorious and evangelical manner to the service of God! Grasp your high calling's privilege. Be assured that *you* are not excluded from its enjoyments. The precious promises are not given to particular, favoured persons; they are given by God, who is no respecter of persons, to the Church—to all true believers. They are yours—freely bestowed to be freely enjoyed. O embrace them! Be like Abraham, persuaded of their truth. Resolutely cast yourself upon them. How strong are the inducements to do so! What superior enjoyment is afforded by a life of holiness, over a life of cold lukewarmness! What power it bestows to do good! Sanctified to God, your endurance to the end is far more probable than if you settle down into a state of religious ease. Then, how much more honour you will bring to your Saviour! Let Him stamp you with his pure image, and men will glorify Him for the power of His grace, as manifested through you. Nor is it in this life alone you will reap the fruits of holiness; in the life to come a brighter crown, a higher dignity, superior enjoyment, greater nearness to Christ, will be your eternal reward."

THE END.

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